Gandhi foresaw a decentralized Indian state where power would be transformed into legitimate government. It may be noted in this connexion that he illustrated his ideas about the decentralization of power when he led the struggle against foreign domination in 1920-2. The programme of non-co-operation with the administrative apparatus of the British government is too well known to be sketched here. In place of the bureaucratic state machinery he expected to establish a parallel state based on reconstituted village councils, a local system of native justice, and the national schools using Indian languages.[175] He envisaged a radical shift not for a mere change of personnel, but for a change of the system of the methods.[176] These ideas underwent later reformulations in the context of attaining the immediate political objective in the form of constitutional democratic government. But he did not move away from the ideal position so far as he himself was concerned. Rather it may be maintained that with the passage of years he was inclined more towards a decentralized democracy based on the village unit.

Incidentally, his advocacy of decentralized political power has led a number of commentators to suggest that the core of his political thought is philosophical anarchism. Whether this suggestion is tenable or not shall be discussed in a subsequent section in detail. The relation of decentralization of power to anarchism may be a matter of opinion, but it must be recognized that he clung to this idea till his last. About a month before his sudden assassination, Prof. S. N. Agarwal drew Gandhi's attention to the fact that the Draft Constitution for Free India did not make even a passing reference to the principle of decentralized democracy. Gandhi replied in the columns of the *Harijan* (21. 12. 47) observing : "Principal Agarwal says that there is no mention or direction about Village Panchayats and decentralization in the foreshadowed Constitution. It is certainly an omission calling for immediate attention if our independence is to reflect the people's voice. The greater the power of the panchayats, better for the people."

Decentralization of power meant for Gandhi greater freedom for the people. The problem of democracy is, as L. T. Hobhouse said, "how to secure any expression of will from the ordinary man". This the elections under democracies are clearly incapable of securing. The vast state machinery does not favour the growth of a climate where the ordinary man can feel that he has something to contribute to public affairs. It is only in small communities that such participation can be envisaged. A host of modern western writers like Bryce, Cole, Joad, Aldous Huxley, Mannheim, Adams, Laski, Mumford, Sorokin, Morgan and others have expressed their opinion in favour of decentralization of power. Agarwal in his *Gandhian Constitution for Free India*, which received the approval of Gandhi, has quoted many leading western authorities on this subject to establish the Gandhian formulation about decentralization of power.

Gandhi had another point of argument in favour of decentralization. In his opinion, "Rurally organized India will run less risk of foreign invasion than urbanized India, well equipped with military, naval and air forces."[177] From the defence aspect, decentralization affords better protection against aerial attacks.

To sum up: Democracy to be successful, in Gandhi's opinion, must be decentralized. Decentralization is necessary for the effective participation of the people in matters concerning themselves. It does not plead for atomistic existence, but for a life based on organization and interdependence, and if necessary, these should reach world-wide proportions. Such interdependence will be of a voluntary and co-operative character. Coercion of any variety will have no place in such a scheme. Individual freedom stands sacrificed in a centralized, authoritarian state, and can only be ensured in a decentralized polity.

One may acclaim[178] the Gandhian thesis as the only sure panacea for the ills of overcentralization of power, while another may reject[179] the Gandhian scheme as 'conservative' in spirit. An examination of these views is a matter of

detailed study and investigation. We are not going here to make a detailed survey of the arguments in favour of and against the Gandhian theory of decentralization and the means he advocated for attaining such a decentralized state. What is relevant here is that Gandhi, being repelled at the sight of concentration of power in the hands of a few, wanted to build up power on a new basis. His solution might have contained elements of non-feasible and impracticable utopianism ; it might have betrayed a lack of the sociological understanding of the problem of power. But the animus of his reaction against over-centralization of the pyramid-structured state machinery bears relevance. The end of human happiness that the theory of decentralization advocates has an enduring appeal in the days when State has assumed the form of Leviathan.

On Nationalism and Internationalism

Louis Fischer says : "In modern times, the urge towards nationhood has been elemental, natural, and instinctive. Gandhi is the most forceful Indian exponent of this urge."[180] Subjectively he incarnated the very spirit of nationalism, its profound indignation against foreign enslavement and the heroic will and determination to end that enslavement. The consciousness of Gandhi was also completely free from even the faintest trace of provincial particularism or communalism. He was not a Gujarati or a Hindu but an Indian, a nationalist *par excellence*. But his concept of nationalism had a wider connotation. In our earlier discussion on his concept of Svarāj, we have seen that his nationalism embraced and emphasized the interest of the masses as opposed to the classes. In the discussion to follow we shall see that the nationalist Gandhi did not preach jingo nationalism. On the other hand, he tried to lead India away from the path of narrow and exclusivist nationalism into a recognition of her duty as a member of the international fraternity of nations based on interdependence as a recognized principle of public life.

Gandhi's early initiation to nationalism, in the main a western ideology,[181] was evident during his stay in London.

It seems quite likely that Gandhi, who was born in India in an age when nationalism swept the imagination of the advanced and educated sections of the population, was influenced by it to some extent in his younger days. But his nationalism effectively dates from his South Africa days when he actually experienced the humiliation of racial discrimination. His nationalist feelings developed since his arrival in India in 1915. Intimate contact with the suffering millions of India made him a staunch opponent of foreign slavery and an ardent nationalist. The most remarkable thing that one finds is that his philosophy of nationalism was not based upon race-hatred and chauvinistic feelings. It was the stroke of his genius that blended nationalism with internationalism. His patriotism transcended geographical frontiers and was conterminus with humanity.

In 1921, he wrote : "For me patriotism is the same as humanity. I am patriotic because I am human and humane. It is not exclusive. It will not hurt England or Germany to serve India. Imperialism has no place in my scheme of life. The law of a patriot is not different from that of a patriarch. And a patriot is so much the less patriot if he is a lukewarm humanitarian. There is no conflict between private and political law."[182]

In his famous article, 'The Great Sentinel', he wrote : "Indian nationalism is not exclusive, nor aggressive, nor destructive. It is health-giving, religious and therefore humanitarian."[183]

Similarly, he wrote in 1924 : "I live for India's freedom and would die for it, because it is part of Truth. Only a free India can worship the true God. I work for India's freedom because my *swadeshi* teaches me that being born in it and having inherited her culture, I am fittest to serve *her* and she has a prior claim to my service. But my patriotism is not exclusive ; it is calculated not only not to hurt another nation but to benefit all in the true sense of the word. India's freedom as conceived by me can never be a menace to the world."[184]

Here is a graphic description of nationalism as conceived of by Gandhi :

"We want freedom for our country, but not at the expense or exploitation of others, not so as to degrade other countries. I do not want the freedom of India if it means the extinction of England or the disappearance of Englishmen. I want the freedom of my country so that other countries may learn something from my free country, *so that the resources of my country might be utilized for the benefit of mankind.* Just as the cult of patriotism teaches us today that the individual has to die for the family, the family has to die for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, and province for the country, even so, a country has to be free in order that it may die, if necessary, for the benefit of the world.* *My love therefore of nationalism, or my idea of nationalism, is that my country may become free, that if need be, the whole country may die, so that the human races may live.* There is no room for race-hatred there. Let that be our nationalism."[185] (emphases added)

In 1925, he wrote : "I want India's rise so that the whole world may benefit. I do not want India to rise on the ruin of other nations."[186]

"I do want to think in terms of the whole world. My patriotism includes the service of humanity.

"I would like to see India free and strong so that she may offer herself as a *willing* and *pure* sacrifice *for the betterment of the world.*"[187] (emphases added)

Speaking of his mission, Gandhi said in 1929 : "My mission is not merely brotherhood of Indian humanity. My mission is not merely freedom of India, though today it undoubtedly engrosses practically the whole of my time. *But through realization of freedom of India I hope to realize and carry on the mission of the brotherhoood of man.* My patriotism is not

* Gandhi used to quote with approval a verse from *Hitopadeśa (Mitralābha, Verse 115)* : "For the sake of the family, forsake the individual ; for the sake of the village, forsake the family ; for the sake of the country, forsake the village ; and for the sake of the soul, forsake the whole world." This verse is also recorded in the ancient collection of moral instructions associated with the name of Cāṇakya ; and thus formed part of India's traditional heritage. "It is interesting", comments Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose, "that Gandhi utilized the verse and gave it a completely new meaning."—*Studies In Gandhism*, Calcutta, Third edition, 1965, p. 108.

an exclusive thing. It is all-embracing and I should reject that patriotism which sought to mount upon the distress or exploitation of other nationalities. The conception of my patriotism is nothing if it is not always, in every case without exception, consistent with the broadest good of humanity at large."[188] (emphasis added)

In 1931, he remarked : "Our nationalism can be no peril to other nations in as much as we will exploit none, just as we will allow none to exploit us. Through *Swarai* we will serve the whole world."[189]

Similarly, he wrote in 1933 : "I am a humble servant of India and in trying to serve India, I serve humanity at large. ...After nearly 50 years of public life, I am able to say that today my faith in the doctrine that the service of one's nation is not inconsistent with the service of the world has grown. It is a good doctrine. Its acceptance alone will ease the situation in the world and stop the mutual jealousies between nations inhabiting this globe of ours."[190]

He told Louis Fischer in June 1942 : "For the time being, India disappears from my gaze. I never wanted independence for India's sake alone. I never wished to play the role of frog-in-the-well."[191]

For Gandhi, there was no antithesis between nationalism and internationalism.* He did not preach abstract internationalism. He knew that one must be a good nationalist in order to become a true internationalist. He explained in his writings that there could be no genuine international co-operation without national independence.

In 1925, he wrote : "It is impossible for one to be internationalist without being a nationalist. Internationalism is possible only when nationalism becomes a fact, i.e., when peoples belonging to different countries have organized themselves and are able to act as one man. It is not nationalism that is evil, it is narrowness, selfishness, exclusiveness which is the bane of

* "My nationalism is intense internationalism", Gandhi said in a message to a French paper.—See *Gandhian Outlook and Techniques*, Ministry of Education, Government of India, 1953, p. 123.

modern nations which is evil. Each wants to profit at the expense of, and rise on the ruins of, the other. Indian nationalism has struck a different path. It wants to organize itself or to find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large. ...God having cast my lot in the midst of the people of India, I should be untrue to my Maker if I failed to serve them. If I do not know how to serve them I shall never know how to serve humanity. And I cannot possibly go wrong so long as I do not harm other nations in the act of serving my country."[192]

Again, in 1931: "You want co-operation between nations for the salvaging of civilization. I want it too, but co-operation presupposes free nations worthy of co-operation. If I am to help in creating or restoring peace and goodwill and resist disturbances thereof, I must have the ability to do so and I cannot do so unless my country has come to its own. At the present moment, the very movement for freedom in India is India's contribution to peace. For so long as India is a subject nation, not only is she a danger to peace, but also England which exploits India. Other nations may tolerate today England's imperialist policy and her exploitation of other nations, but they certainly do not appreciate it; and they would gladly help in the prevention of England becoming a greater and greater menace everyday. Of course you will say that India free can become a menace herself. But let us assume that she will behave herself with her doctrine of non-violence, if she achieves her freedom through it and for all her bitter experiences of being a victim of exploitation."[193]

Co-operation of subject India with the Allies during World War II was a preposterous proposition. Gandhi, though an ardent advocate of international collaboration and co-operation, did not mince words reminding Louis Fischer that "to collaborate we must be free. Slaves do not fight for freedom."[194]

Gandhi fought for and led the nation for national freedom, but as has been seen above from his own writings, he did not advocate an isolated independent existence. In fact, his emphasis was on a 'federation of friendly interdependendent states', and

as national independence was the pre-condition for such an existence, he waged battle against foreign domination.

As early as 1924, he wrote : "Isolated independence is not the goal of the world States. It is voluntary interdependence."[195]

Again, in the same year : "The better mind of the world desires today not absolutely independent States warring one against another, but a federation of friendly interdependent States. The consummation of that event may be far off. I want to make no grand claim for our country. But I see nothing grand or impossible about our expressing our readiness for universal interdependence rather than independence. I desire the ability to be totally independent without asserting the independence."[196]

Similarly, he told a gathering in Bombay in 1931 : "My notion of *Purna* Swaraj is not isolated independence but healthy and dignified interdependence. My nationalism, fierce though it is, is not exclusive, not designed to harm any nation or individual. Legal maxims are not so legal as they are moral. I believe in the eternal truth of '*sic utere tuo ut alienum non loedas*'."[197]

In a letter to Jawaharlal, dated 14 September 1933, he wrote as follows :

"Nor have I the slightest difficulty in agreeing with you that in these days of rapid intercommunication and a growing consciousness of the oneness of all mankind, we must recognize that our nationalism must not be inconsistent with progressive internationalism. India cannot stand in isolation and unaffected by what is going on in other parts of the world. I can, therefore, go the whole length with you and say that 'we should range ourselves with the progressive forces of the world'."[198]

He again asserted this principle of international co-operation and solidarity in 1939 : "A free democratic India will gladly associate herself with other free nations for mutual defence against aggression and for economic co-operation. She will work for the establishment of a real world order based on freedom and democracy, utilizing the world's knowledge and resources for the progress and advancement of humanity."[199]

It may be recalled here that the democratic world federation he visualized could only be raised on the foundation of non-violence (see p. 408 *supra*). He envisaged the establishment of a world federation as the necessary condition for world peace.

In a letter, dated Sevagram 28.7.42, addressed to Maurice Frydman who was very much interested in the idea of world federation, Gandhi wrote :

"I told you that I was one with you and that I was trying to take the Congress and everybody towards world federation. I also told you if it ever comes, it will come through Sevagram or the Sevagram way. I want Free India, too, for that purpose. If I can get freedom for India through non-violent means, power of non-violence is firmly established, empire idea dissloves and the World-State takes its place in which all the states of the world are free and equal, no state has its military. There may be a world police to keep order in the absence of universal belief in non-violence."[200]

In 1947, Gandhi said in reply to a question that the only condition on which the world could live was that it should be united under one central governing body composed of representatives of the component parts.[201]

"I would not like to live in this world if it is not to be one world.* I would certainly like to see that dream realized in my life time", Gandhi declared in Inter-Asian Relations Conference held in the last week of March 1947.

"If you work with a fixed determination, there is no doubt that in our own generation we will realise this dream."[202]

Gandhi's intense nationalism or the concept of *Svadeśī* fitted in quite well with his one-world idea. He repeatedly asserted that the concept of *Svadeśī* was not based on narrow exclusivism. The spirit of sacrifice underlying *Svadeśī* should go beyond a man's own community and should embrace the whole of humanity. He believed in the truth implicitly that a

* Gandhi told Prof. Catlin in 1946 that there could be no "one world" unless it were founded upon union in respect for truth—See George Catlin, *In The Path of Mahatma Gandhi*, Macdonald & Co., (Publishers) Ltd., London, 1948, p. 281.

man could serve his neighbours as well as humanity at large at the same time, provided the service to the neighbours was in no way selfish or exclusive, i.e., did not in any way involve the exploitation of any other human being.[203]

Gandhi discussed the reason why *Svadeśī*, which he called "the acme of universal service,"[204] implied preference for the nearest and the immediate. One may refer to *From Yeravda Mandir* for a clearer exposition of the doctrine of *Svadeśī*. *Svadeśī* recognized the scientific limitation of human capacity for service.[205] Thus understood, *Svadeśi* serves the cause of international brotherhood.

Gandhi's fundamental religious belief that all are equal before God explains to an extent why he adhered to the concept of human brotherhood as opposed to national exclusivism. In the memorable article, 'The Doctrine of The Sword', Gandhi wrote : "My religion has no geographical limits. If I have a living faith in it, it will transcend my love for India herself."[206] His deep humanitarianism found its expression when he declared : "There is no limit to extending our services to our neighbours across State-made frontiers. God never made those frontiers."[207] This statement made in 1931 was not just a culled-out, isolated statement to prove our point that Gandhi's supreme concern was humanity at large. In 1947, on the eve of independence, he was asked the question, 'If a neighhouring State is in want, what should Free India do ?' His categorical answer was that a truly independent India was bound to run to the help of its neighbours in distress.[208]

Speaking of Gandhi's concept of nationalism and internationalism, Dr. Dhirendra Mohan Datta observes : "Indian nationalism drew its inspiration from the dominant Indian belief in the fundamental unity of humanity in spite of its diversity, and the consequent belief in the reasonableness of human equality. So nationalism logically led on to internationalism. Love of man impelled Gandhi to be both a nationalist and an internationalist."[209] While we express our complete agreement with Dr. Datta when he asserts 'love of man

as being the motive force of Gandhi's nationalism and internationalism, we fail to persuade ourselves to accept the earlier portion of his statement as valid where he traces the source of Indian nationalism. Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon. It came into being during the British period as a result of the action and interaction of numerous subjective and objective forces and factors which developed within the Indian society under conditions of the British rule and the impact of world forces.[210] As Asoka Mehta and Achyut Patwardhan argue: "...a historical approach is necessary, for history is to a student of politics what a laboratory is to a man of science. It provides him a frame of reference with which to test the validity of political ideas. From history then we have to find out how and at what time the group-feeling called nationality first become conscious and vocal. We have, for instance, in *Atharva Veda*, which even at the lowest estimate is 4,000 years old, the famous *Prithvi Sukta* or hymns of praise and gratitude to Mother Earth. The content of some of these hymns is strikingly similar to that of some of the modern national anthems. But will that justify us in attributing a feeling of nationality to the Aryan *Rishis* who sang these hymns? Certainly not, for it would be absurd to call this simple love of Mother Earth patriotism or attribute any national feeling to it."[211]

Besides his deep religious convictions and seminal humanism, the advanced thought-currents and objective forces helped to mould Gandhi's ideas about nationalism and internationalism. His idea of internationalism was not to be viewed merely as a projection of his *advaita* faith; it was certainly there, but the political aspect should not be lost sight of. We find him recognizing the essential political bearing of the problem of internationalism and world order. It was proof of his genius that he could integrate his philosophical faith with political acumen.

His native sense of realism enabled him to discover the interconnexion between creative nationalism and genuine internationalism. The goal being the establishment of world brotherhood, he realized that slaves had no place in that fraternity. As early as 1909, he could assert: "Slaves ourselves, it would be

a mere pretension to think of freeing others."[212] As a practical politician, he did not think it worthwhile to mouth fashionable phrases of internationalism, but he moved in the direction of an international order of free nations by working for the establishment of a free and democratic India. It was his earnest belief that India could further the interests of internationalism only by freeing herself from the shackles of bondage. That is why he devoted almost all his energy and time for the attainment of freedom of his country. As he himself said, his patriotism was both exclusive and inclusive. Exclusive in the sense that his nationalism was not of competitive and antagonistic nature. For Gandhi, nationalism was not an end in itself but a stage, though a necessary one, in the political evolution of man. One may find parallels between Gandhi's and Mazzini's ideas about nationalism.[213] "God", Mazzini used to say, "has engraved a message on the cradle of every nation which it has to give to the world". His nationalism was not exclusive ; it was informed with a moral purpose. It had meaning as a new "tie" for humanity and the emphasis was always on its "fraternal and liberal development."[214] In the name of nationality itself he denounced the narrow spirit of nationalism and "the stupid presumption on the part of each people that they are capable of solving the political, social and economic problems alone ; and their forgetfulness of the great truth that the cause of the peoples is one."[215] One may also recall that Gandhi felt himself closer to Mazzini's concept of independence. (See *Hind Swaraj*)

Nationalism carried a distinct meaning for Gandhi ; it could enlist his allegiance only when its political and moral boundaries were conterminous.

Attitude towards Imperialism and Fascism

It was in the heyday of nationalism that Mazzini came forward. But the later history of nationalism in Europe records that it had degenerated into a cult of self-aggrandizement. In countries which had already developed into nation-states, the economic development made liberalism an inadequate creed.

It had either to broaden internally—by extending democracy from political rights to economic freedom of the masses—into social democracy, or expand externally as imperialism. There was thus a duality in nationalism. The western states sought a solution in imperial adventure. As J. A. Hobson records in his pioneer study, *Imperialism* (1902), Great Britain set out its sails 'in forcing bad markets and finding speculative fields of investment in distant corners of the earth, adding millions of square miles and of unassimilable population to the area of the Empire.' Imperialism, tied to the politics of power and profit, created international rivalries and the constant threat of war[216] —the corollary of which was militarism. And militarism negates the political and social gains of democracy.

Gandhi experienced this transformation of nationalism into imperialism. As is well known, he led the greatest battle against the mightiest Empire. We shall not engage ourselves in outlining the role he played in that battle ; we would rather make a study of how his ideas evolved from a belief in imperialism's progressive character to a criticism of its motives and an ultimate rejection of its results.

Gandhi recorded in his *Autobiography* that during his student days in London he developed the habit of reading newspapers like The *Daily Telegraph*, The *Daily News* and *The Pall Mall Gazette*. The last named daily was independent ; under the editorship of William T. Stead and then of Edward T. Cook during Gandhi's London phase, its policy adhered to J. R. Seeley's conception of the civilizing role of imperialism throughout the world. For the following score of years Gandhi too was attached to this view of the Brtish Empire.[217] In the first decade and a half of his South African phase, he was generally loyal to the British Empire. In the preamble declaration of Gandhi's *Indian Opinion*, we read : "The Policy of the paper would be to advocate the cause of the British Indians in this sub-continent. But while it would insist upon the rights of the community, it would not be slow to point out to its responsibilities also as members of a mighty Empire. It would persistently endeavour to bring about a proper understanding between the two

communities which Providence has brought together under one flag."[218]

Speaking of 'Ourselves' the same issue carried the editorial note to the effect that "there is nothing in our programme but a desire to promote harmony and goodwill between the different sections of the *one* mighty Empire."[219]

He had warm praise for British justice. In an article in *Indian Opinion*, entitled 'A well-deserved Victory', dated 14. 5. 1904, he wrote : "...in British Dominions, no matter how high prejudices may run, there is always a haven of safety in the hightest courts of justice."[220]

Appealing to the Potchefstroom Vigilants to desist from violence and incitement, he wrote : "The history of British rule is the history of constitutional evolution. Under the the British flag, respect for the law has become a part of the nature of the people." ('The Potchefstroom Vigilants and British Indians' in *Indian Opinion*, 24.12.1904).[221]

The strain of racial discrimination practised by the colonialists in South Africa had its impact on his mind. Gandhi's faith in the civilizing mission of the Empire received a severe jolt. To him, imperialism appeared as a concomitant of western industrial civilization. "Let us pray", he wrote in conclusion to his paraphrase of Ruskin's *Unto This Last*, "that India is saved from the fate that has overtaken Europe, where the nations are poised for an attack on one another, and are silent only because of the stockpiling of armaments. Someday there will be an explosion, and then Europe will be a veritable hell on earth. Non-white races are looked upon as legitimate prey by every European state. What else can we expect where covetousness is the ruling passion in the breasts of men ?"[222] We see Gandhi at this period growing alive to the nature of European economic penetration. India provided the classic example. About the British East India Company he wrote in *Hind Swaraj* : "That corporation was versed alike in commerce and war. It was unhampered by questions of morality. Its object was to increase its commerce and to make money. ...To protect the latter it employed an army....

"Napoleon is said to have described the English as a nation of shop-keepers. It is a fitting description. They hold whatever dominions they have for sake of their commerce. Their army and their navy are intended to protect it. ...They wish to convert the whole world into a vast market for their goods."[223]

During the First World War Gandhi had placed a moratorium, so to say, on his criticism of imperialism. But from 1920 onwards full-throated denunciation of British imperialism marked his political career.

Replying to the allegation of inconsistency against him, he wrote in *Young India* (17.11.21):

"I know now that I was wrong in thinking that I was a citizen of the empire. But on those few occasions [Gandhi's service during Boer War, Zulu 'rebellion', raising ambulance corps in London in 1914 and enlistment of recruits during World War I] I did honestly believe that inspite of the many disabilities that my country was labouring under, it was making its way towards freedom, and that on the whole the Government from the popular standpoint was not wholly bad and that the British administrators were honest though insular and dense. Holding that view, I set about doing what an ordinary Englishman would do in the circumtances. I was not wise or important enough to take independent action. I had no business to judge or scrutinise ministerial decisions with the solemnity of a tribunal. I did not impute malice to the ministers either at the time of the Boer War, the Zulu revolt or the late war. I did not consider Englishmen nor do I now consider them as particularly bad or worse than other human beings. I considered and still consider them as capable of high motives and actions as any other body of men and equally capable of making mistakes. I therefore felt that I sufficiently discharged my duty as a man and a citizen by offering my humble services to the empire in the hour of its need whether local or general.

"The whole situation is now changed for me. My eyes, I fancy, are opened. Experience has made me wiser. I consider the existing system of government to be wholly bad

and requiring special national effort to end or mend it. It does not possess within itself capacity for self-improvement. That I still believe many English administrators to be honest does not assist me, because I consider them to be as blind an deluded as I was myself. Therefore I can take no pride in calling the empire mine or describing myself as a citizen. On the contrary, I fully realise that I am a *pariah*, untouchable of the empire. I must therefore constantly pray for its radical reconstruction or total destruction...."[224]

The excerpt is given above *in extenso*, for it lays bare the evolution of his idea about the British Empire.

Another significant document that explains his evolution from 'a staunch loyalist and co-operator' to 'an uncompromising disaffactionist and non-co-operator', is his written statement before the Court in the historic trial of March 1922.[225]

In 1929, in an article in *Young India*, he indicted exploitive colonialism as the first cause of the war. "Is not the prime cause of modern wars the inhuman race for exploitation of the so-called weaker races of the earth ?"[226] While talking to an American interviewer in 1940, he asked : "Why is there the war today, if it is not for the satisfaction of the desire to share the spoils ?"[227] However, Gandhi distinguished between the imperialism which he criticized scathingly and its agents who administered the decisions of the imperial government. For he regarded man above institutions and he believed in the redemption of man. (see p. 110 *supra*)

Gandhi held that imperialism had its origin in man's covetousness or greed. This belief might have been due to the influence of the Upaniṣadic tradition that he inherited. The parallel is to be found in Tagore who held that greed was the seed of all that polluted the sense of human unity. Dr. Paul F. Power observes in this connexion : "As to Gandhi's economic interpretation of imperialism emphasizing the greed of men, such an analysis overlooks the motivating factors of prestige and adventure which have been significant in the history of Western colonialism. It should be noted also that Gandhi's economic critique of imperialism is non-Marxist in origins

tracing back to the influences of Naoroji, Ruskin, Gokhale and Tolstoy. He seldom indicted capitalism as such for sustaining imperialism as have Marxists drawing from Lenin's *Imperialism : The Highest Stage of Capitalism.*"[228]

While it is true that Gandhi's ideas about imperialism and economic ruin of national wealth were to a great extent influenced by the above-mentioned thinkers, still it cannot be said for certain that 'he seldom indicted capitalism as such for sustaining imperialism'. Gandhi, it is true, did not systematically analyse the social roots of imperialism as was done by Lenin. He was not built up that way. But his unerring insight penetrated deep into the social basis of imperialism as can be illustrated from his interview to an American journalist wherein he said that 'Your land is owned by a few capitalist owners'. (see p. 398 *supra*) In our discussion on Gandhi's critique of Western democracy, we have seen that he charged capitalist democracies with expansionism. And what else is imperialism but loot of markets and financial investment outside one's own country ? And further, 'prestige and adventure' might have played their part in the history of western colonialism, but in our opinion 'the motivating factors' were *in essence* economic. The factors of 'prestige and adventure' were ostensible and those sentiments were called forth to put a covering on the sordid aspect of the whole thing. Whether one agrees or not to Gandhi's analysis of imperialism and his suggested solution for the liquidation of the same, it cannot be gainsaid that he grasped the nature of the phenomenon. This comprehension, we are sure, was not a product of a theoretical analysis, rather he arrived at the truth from his experience. His method, it may be said once again, was empiric.

Italian Fascism and German National Socialism were the clearest expressions of the autocratic and intolerant nationalism. The whole philosophy of Nazism and Fascism was based on the premise of the sacrifice of the individual at the altar of the nation or the State. "Fascism", said Hitler in a speech delivered on 10 March 1933, "is against individualist abstractions

founded on a materialist basis of the type of the 18th century. It is not the individual but the nation which is at the centre of the Law." The merging of the individual into the nation was one of the outstanding characteristics of totalitariam nationalism. As has been said, Hegel's Absolute State and Bismarckian nationalism culminated in modern totalitarianism.[229] Jingo nationalism believed that violence was the *ultima ratio* of human endeavour.

We have seen above that Gandhi had strong repulsions against aggressive nationalism based on force and as was only expected, he denounced Nazism and Fascism in no uncertain terms.

On his way back from the Round Table Conference, Gandhi paid a visit to Rome and called on Mussolini. The Fascist dictator asked Gandhi whether he expected to win independence for India through non-violence and what he thought of the fascist state which he had built. With disconcerting frankness, Gandhi told Mussolini that he was only building a house of cards. Gandhi was not at all impressed by the dictator's personality : "His eyes are never still."[230]

Gandhi's censure of Fascism was a logical extension of his anti-colonialism. *The Diary of Mahadev Desai* records (entry dated May 27, 1932) : "Fascist propaganda is being carried on even in England. There are some Fascists in Parliament,* and that Winston Churchill is a great admirer of Mussolini's."[231]

In 1938, Gandhi denounced the militarist philosophy of Hitler and Mussolini : "The philosophy for which the two dictators stand calls it cowardice to shrink from carnage. They exhaust the resources of poetic art in order to glorify organized murder. ...They are ever ready for war."[232]

In another article, entitled 'How to combat Hitlerism', dated June 18, 1940, he wrote : "Whatever there Hitler may ultimately prove to be, we know what Hitlerism has come to mean. It means naked ruthless force to an exact science and worked with scientific precision."[233]

* This refers to Oswald Mosley, the British Fascist leader.

Gandhi considered violence as a transitory phenomenon corrected by non-violent resistance. While explaining his weapon of non-violence to two Negro visitors in 1937, Gandhi said: "A violent man's activity is most visible, while it lasts. But it is always transitory. Hitler and Mussolini on the one hand and Stalin on the other are able to show immediate effectiveness of violence. But it will be as transitory as that of Jhenghis's slaughter."[234]

Despite the worst demonstration of the naked violence of Fascism and Nazi tyranny, Gandhi did not lose his faith in the redemptive nature of man. He told a delegation of Christian leaders in December 1939: "...belief in non-violence is based on the assumption that the human nature in its essence is one and, therefore, unfailingly responds to the advances of love."[235]

The belief that powerful dictators are not beyond redemption is to be found in Gandhi's letter to Hitler dated Abbotabad, 23 July 1939: "It is quite clear that you are today the one person in the world who can prevent a war which may reduce humanity to the savage state. Must you pay that price for an object however worthy it may appear to you to be? Will you listen to the appeal of one who has deliberately shunned the method of war not without considerable success? Anyway, I anticipate your forgiveness, if I have erred in writing to you."[236]

"This manslaughter must be stopped. You are losing; if you persist it will only result in greater bloodshed", Gandhi wrote about May 1940 to Lord Linlithgow, the then Viceroy of India, concerning the war. "Hitler is not a bad man. If you will call it off today, he will follow suit. If you want to send me to Germany or anywhere else, I am at your disposal. You can also inform the Cabinet about this."[237]

Gandhi addressed a second letter to Hitler, dated Wardha, December 24, 1941. Needless to say, the Censor intervened and he was not allowed to publish it, nor presumably did it ever reach Hitler. He had intended to address a joint appeal to Hitler and Mussolini and he expressed the hope that

Mussolini would take the letter as addressed to him also, with the necessary changes. He wrote : "We have no doubt about your bravery or devotion to your Fatherland, nor do we believe that you are the monster described by your opponents. But your own writings and pronouncements and those of your friends and admirers leave no room for doubt that many of your acts are monstrous and unbecoming of human dignity especially in the estimation of men like me who believe in universal friendliness." He continued : "We resist British imperialism no less than Nazism. If there is a difference, it is in degree.* One fifth of the human race has been brought under the British heel by means that will not bear scrutiny. Our resistance to it does not mean harm to the British people. We seek to convert them, not to defeat them on the battlefield. Ours is an unarmed revolt against the British rule. ...We know what the British heel means for us and the non-European races of the world. But we would never wish to end British rule with German aid." After elaborating upon his doctrine of non-violent resistance he appealed to Hitler "in the name of humanity to stop the war."[238] This letter indicates that, as in relation to British imperialism, he regarded man as above the system he upholds.

At times Gandhi's view of fascism was a paradoxical mixture of appreciation and criticism.[239] "It is not that people would necessarily be unhappy under fascism", he said in 1934. 'We may leave aside Hitler, but under Mussolini Italy is certainly better off than before. Some of the public utility works undertaken there are commendable. The standard of living has improved. But what does it all avail ? There is no freedom there. Whoever dares to oppose Mussolini's policy invites death. And now even killing has become unnecessary. People have adapted themselves to the new condition and are content with it. He has done the work more cleverly than Hitler."[240] Another mixed comment is to be found in his article, 'How to combat Hitlerism', referred to above. "They [the Germans] will honour Hitler as a genius,

* See p. 399n *supra*.

as a brave man, as matchless organizer, and much more. But I should hope that the Germans of the future will have learnt the art of discrimination even about their heroes." In the same letter, he urged upon the victims of Nazi oppression to defeat Hitlerism not with counter-Hitlerism but by organizing non-violent defence, and he fervently hoped that the moral force of non-violence would ultimately triumph.

Gandhi knew that the basis of imperialism, Nazism and Fascism was rooted in violence and that there was no qualitative difference among these systems ; even if there was a difference, the difference was only in degree. But as he said in 1939, his sympathies were wholly with the Allies[241] which did not mean endorsement, in any shape or form, of the doctrine of the sword for the defence of even proven right.[242] His attitude in relation to the Second World War speaks of the evolving pattern of his pacifism.

Attitude towards War : Was Gandhi a pacifist ?

The famous German General Clausewitz said long ago that 'war is the continuation of politics by other means'. The tragic and horrible experiences of the last two world wars, and more particularly of the Second World War, has confirmed rather than belied the veracity of the statement. Gandhi lived and moved in an age when the imperialist-fascist powers revealed themselves in naked violence in their design against the weaker nations of the earth. His sensitive soul rebelled against the cruel destruction of human lives and the repudiation of basic human values. Pacifism is the revolt of the human spirit against the mad drive for armageddon.* Pacifists are against *all* wars, whether just or unjust. Was Gandhi a pacifist in the popular or accepted meaning of the term ? J. B. Kripalani says : "Gandhiji was not a pacifist in the accpted sense of the term."[243] Prof. Tsurumi says : "Gandhiji was not a mere lover

* "Humanitarian opposition to the brutalities and carnage which wars entail and aversion to the horrors of personal participation in battle are potent motivations for pacifism."—Norman Angell in *Encylopaedia of the Social Sciences*, Editor-in-Chief : Edwin R. A. Seligman, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1957, vol. 11, p. 528.

of peace, justice and human compassion, but he was a militant pacifist of outstanding courage and fearlessness."[244] The Rev. Jack C. Winslow calls Gandhi's pacifism 'aggressive'.[245] Unlike the Conservatives who are often seekers of peace rather than of truth, Gandhi consistently held that truth, not peace, was the ultimate good. Further, he was the nationalist leader *par excellence*, as we have seen earlier. The demands of his nationalism upon his idealism explain why he did not or could not apply the standards of absolute pacifism persistently. For these reasons his opinions about the character of war sometimes differ from those of western pacifists who hold that in every respect war is the negation of justice.[246]

One notices, interestingly enough, an evolution of Gandhi's ideas about war. Dr. Paul F. Power observes: "Rather vexingly, Gandhi's ideas about war cut across unqualified pacifism, conditional pacifism and patriotic realism. Divergent and sometimes conflicting positions can be traced throughout most of the years of his public career, although one may dominate the others during particular phases."[247] We shall try to give a brief outline of his views about war within a chronological framework.

The first military conflict that Gandhi encountered was the Boer War (1899). His loyalty to the Empire drove him to side with the British in that War. He felt that if he demanded rights as a British citizen, it was also his duty, as such, to participate in the defence of the British Empire. He then held that India could achieve her complete emancipation only within and through the British Empire.[248] We have seen (pp. 429-30 *supra*) that his evaluation of the Empire changed with the time and he confessed that he was wrong in thinking that he was a citizen of the Empire. One must bear in mind that at this time, though he was leaning towards it, he had not yet made non-violence a fundamental ethical principle. His attention was upon fear, which was incompatible with self-respect, and hence must be got rid of. Obviously, service in the Boer War was part of his campaign of inspiring the Indian community with courage,

discipline and enterprise, and no doubt, in that respect it was valuable.[249]

During the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905), *Indian Opinion* adopted an editorial policy which was that of admiring the 'epic heroism' of the Japanese. The journal urged the South African Indians to "emulate to some extent at least the example of Japan." Having eulogized Japan's 'bravery and sagacity', Gandhi's paper welcomed the war's end and hoped that in the future, nations would use pacific means to settle their differences.[250]

One may infer that *Indian Opinion* took the position it did partly because Britain then supported Japan as a deterrent against Russian expansion in Asia, and partly because nationalists were enthusiastic about Japan contesting a Western power.[251] It may be recalled here that the victory of Japan over Russia in 1905 was hailed in India as "the dawn of a new era for the whole of Asia". Incidentally, Tolstoy wrote bitterly against Russia with respect to the Russo-Japanese War. We find Gandhi to indicate, during the Russo-Japanese War, his belief that in war one side could possess justice and that a positive good could emerge from war. He did so while maintaining that peace was superior to war.

Gandhi's participation in the Zulu 'rebellion' in 1906 was dictated by his 'genuine sense of loyalty', though he had doubts about the 'rebellion' itself.[252] *Indian Opinion* made a special appeal to the white colonists "to make use of, for purposes of war, one hundred thousand Indians who are perfectly loyal, and who are capable of good training."[253] Gandhi's desire to earn status and respect for his countrymen through wartime service was implicit in his paper's policy.

The Zulu 'rebellion' was an eye-opener to Gandhi. He saw the naked atrocities of the whites against the sons of the soil. The racialist policy pursued by the colonists set him thinking in newer terms. Thus his disillusionment with British imperialism developed, as we have seen earlier in a discussion of his views on imperialism. "The British Government in India", he wrote in his English preface to *Indian Home Rule*, "constitutes a

struggle between the Modern Civilisation, which is the Kingdom of Satan, and the Ancient Civilisation, which is the Kingdom of God. The one is the God of War, the other is the God of Love."[254] He indicted modern civilization as one "grown as terrible as a wolf through its hunger for wealth and its greedy pursuit of worldly pleasures."[255] During this phase he considered war as a degrading and brutalizing instrument of politics and commended self-suffering as a superior weapon for resolving conflicts.

When the World War I broke out, Gandhi raised recruits in India as much as he raised an ambulance corps in London in 1914. He was confronted with a spiritual dilemma at that time. As a matter of fact, he recorded in his *Autobiography*, the very same line of argument that persuaded him to take part in the Boer War had weighed with him on that occasion. It was quite clear to him that participation in war could never be consistent with *ahiṃsā*. But he thought that England's need should not be turned into the Indians' opportunity, and he had hoped to improve his status and that of his people through the British Empire.[256] In a letter to the Viceroy, dated April 30, 1918, Gandhi wrote : "I recognize that in the hour of its danger we must give, as we have decided to give, ungrudging and unequivocal support to the the empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectation that our goal will be reached all the more speedily."[257]

An additional reason was that while he was in England in 1914 he enjoyed protection of the British fleet ; consequently he had felt obligated to the process of potential violence and was impelled to pay his debt by service in the war.[258]

Some pacifists criticized him for having participated in the Boer, Zulu and the Great European War. The main charges were that he deviated from the strict principle of *ahiṃsā* and that he preferred expediency and subordinated principle to the interests of the former. In an article in *Young India*, dated 17.11.21, he himself posed the question : "What was my duty

as an out-and-out believer in the religion of *ahimsa*—non-violence ?"

"My conception of *ahimsa* impels me always to dissociate myself from almost every one of the activities I am engaged in. My soul refuses to be satisfied so long as it is a helpless witness of a single wrong or a single misery. But it is not possible for me, a weak, frail, miserable being, to mend every wrong or to hold myself free of blame for all the wrong I see. The spirit in me pulls one way, the flesh in me pulls in the opposite direction....

"I was again an ordinary citizen no wiser than my fellows, myself believing in *ahimsa* and the rest not believing in it at all but refusing to do their duty assisting the Government because they were actuated by anger and malice. They were refusing out of their ignorance and weakness. As a fellow worker, it became my duty to guide them aright. I therefore placed before them their clear duty, explained the doctrine of *ahimsa* to them and let them make their choice which they did. For under Swaraj too I would not hesitate to advise those who would bear arms to do so and fight for the country."[259]

In the *Autobiography* we read: "All of us recognized the immorality of war. ...It was quite clear to me that participation in war could never be consistent with *ahimsa*. But it is not always given to one to be equally clear about one's duty. A votary of truth is often obliged to grope in the dark."[260]

Then again, "When two nations are fighting, the duty of a votary of *ahimsa* is to stop the war. He who is not equal to that duty, he who has no power of resisting war, he who is not qualified to resist war, may take part in war, and yet wholeheartedly try to free himself, his nation and the world from war."[261]

A critic had alleged that his conduct during World War I had violated his interpretation of the Gītā which says that we should never act with our eye on the fruits of our action. To this Gandhi replied: "The verse referred to from the

Gita has a double meaning. One is that there should be no selfish purpose behind our actions. That of gaining Swaraj is not selfish purpose. Secondly, to be detached from fruits of actions is not to be ignorant of them, or to disregard or disown them. To be detached is never to abandon action because the contemplated result may follow. On the contrary, it is proof of immovable faith in the certainty of the contemplated result following in due course."[262]

Gandhi's non-absolutist pacifism is well illustrated in some of his answers to criticism of his wartime service and general remarks. Any student of Gandhian philosophy will be well advised to consult the files of *Young India** for reading Gandhi's mind at first hand.

For obvious reasons, it would not be possible to deal exhaustively with this question, but we shall refer to and quote at length, for purpose of illustration, from a few of the many articles that he wrote in the columns of *Young India* in reply to western pacifist criticism.

The famous Dutch pacifist, Rev. B. De Ligt, strongly criticized[263] Gandhi's participation first in the Boer War and then in the Great War of 1914 and invited him to explain his conduct in tho light of *ahiṃsā*. Gandhi covered the entire grounds of criticism levelled against him in his two articles (*Young India*, 13.9.28, 9.5.29) written in reply to B. De Ligt and as such we shall concentrate on those.

To quote him :

"There is no defence for my conduct weighed only in the scales of *ahimsa*. I draw no distinction between those whe wield the weapons of destruction and those who do Red Cross work. Both participate in war and advance its cause. Both are guilty of the crime of war. But even after introspection during all these years, I feel that, in the circumstances in which I found myself, I was bound to adopt the course I did both during the Boer War and the Great

* *Young India*, 17.11.21, 23.3.22, 5.11.25, 8.3.28, 15.3.28, 13.9.28, 7.2.29, 9.5.29, 31.12.31 etc. For relevant materials in one volume one may also consult M. K. Gandhi, *Non-Violence in Peace and War*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1962, vol. 1.

European War and for that matter the so-called Zulu 'Rebellion' of Natal in 1906.

"Life is governed by a multitude of forces. It would be smooth sailing, if one could determine the course of one's actions only by one general principle whose application at a given moment was too obvious to need even a moment's reflection. But I cannot recall a single act which could be so easily determined.

"Being a confirmed war resister I have never given myself training in the use of destructive weapons in spite of opportunities to take such training. It was perhaps thus that I escaped direct destruction of human life. But so long as I lived under a system of government based on force and voluntarily partook of the many facilities and privileges it created for me, I was bound to help that government to the extent of my ability when it was engaged in a war, unless I non-co-operated with that government and renounced to the utmost of my capacity the privileges it offered me.*

"...I could not, it would be madness for me, to sever my connection with the society to which I belong. And on those three occasions I had no thought of non-co-operating with the British Government. My position regarding the Government is totally different today, and hence I should not voluntarily participate in its wars,** and I should risk imprisonment and even the gallows, if I was forced to take up arms or otherwise take part in its military operations.

* "What do you say to my recruiting campaign? It is for me a religious activity undertaken for the sacred doctrine of *ahimsa*. I have made the discovery that India has lost the power to fight—not the inclination. She must regain the power and then, if she will, deliver to a groaning world the doctrine of *ahimsa*. She must give abundantly out of her strength, not out of her weakness. She may never do it. That to me would mean her effacement. She would lose her individuality and would be like the other nations—a worshipper of brute-force. This recruiting work is perhaps the hardest task yet undertaken by me. I may fail to gain recruits. I shall still have given the best political education to the people." —Letter to H. S. Polak, *Incidents of Gandhiji's Life*, edited by Chandrashankar Shukla, Vora & Co. (Publishers) Ltd., Bombay, 1949, p. 245.

** Reinhold Niebuhr comments: "Here the important point is that the violent character of Government is recognised and the change of policy is explained in terms of a change in national allegiance and not in terms of pacifist principles."—*Moral Man and Immoral Society*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1947, pp. 243-4.

"But that still does not solve the riddle. If there was a national Government, whilst I should not take any direct part in any war, I can conceive occasions when it would be my duty to vote for the military training of those who wish to take it. For I know that all its members do not believe in non-violence to the extent I do. It is not possible to make a person or a society non-violent by compulsion.

"Non-violence works in a most mysterious manner. Often a man's actions defy analysis in terms of non-violence ; equally often his actions may wear the appearance of violence when he is absolutely non-violent in the highest sense of the term and is subsequently found to be so. All I can then claim for my conduct is that it was, in the instances cited, actuated in the interests of non-violence. There was no thought of sordid national or other interest. I do not believe in the promotion of national or any other interest at the sacrifice of some other interest.

"...For me non-violence is not a mere philosophical principle. It is the rule and breath of my life. I know I fail often, sometimes consciously, more often unconsciously. ...I am painfully aware of my failings.

"But the Light within me is steady and clear. There is no escape for any of us save through truth and non-violence. I know that war is wrong, is an unmitigated evil. I know too that it has got to go. I firmly believe that freedom won through bloodshed or fraud is no freedom. ...Not violence, not untruth but non-violence, Truth is the law of our being."[264]

In another article (*Young India*, 9.5.29) he reminded the Dutch pacifist that he was "uncompromisingly against all war." But at the same time, he urged upon the western pacifists to appreciate 'one vital difference' between them and him. "They do not represent exploited nations ; I represent the most exploited nation on earth. To use an unflattering comparison, they represent the cat and I represent the mouse.' * He

* Elsewhere, in a dialogue with European war resisters, Gandhi pointed out that he was opposing alien rule, while they were dealing with states to which they felt some loyalty.—See Muriel Lester, *Entertaining Gandhi*, Ivor Nicholson & Watson, London, 1932, p. 161.

alleged that "fellow war-resisters in the West are participants in war even in peace time inasmuch as they pay for the preparations that are being made for it and otherwise sustain governments whose main occupation is such preparation."* He reminded them that "*all activity for stopping war must prove fruitless so long as the causes of war are not understood and radically dealt with.*" (emphasis added)

One commentator has aptly said : "An escapist, self-righteous, moral neutralism is incompatible with the tenets of Gandhism."[265]

Gandhi's conditional pacifism or non-absolute position regarding war can be best illustrated if we take into account his pronounced sympathy for the Allies during the Second World War and the victims of fascist aggression. He wrote in *Harijan* (4.11.39, p. 327) : "It is open to a war resister to judge between two combatants and wish success to the one who has *justice* on his side. By so judging he is more likely to bring peace between the two than by remaining a mere spectator." (emphasis added)

He wrote on 'Conundrums' : "And yet, strange as it may appear, my sympathies are wholly with the Allies. Willy-nilly this war is resolving itself into one between such democracy as the West has evolved and totalitarianism as it is typified in Hitler."[268] (For similar statements one may refer to *Harijan*, 16.9.39, 14.10.39, 29.9.40 etc.)

Further, "I believe all war to be wholly wrong. But if we scrutinize the motives of the two warring parties, we may find one to be in the right and the other in the wrong. For instance, if A wishes to seize B's country, B is obviously the wronged one. Both fight with arms. I do not believe in violent

* Gandhi told the Conscientious Objectors of Europe in 1931 : "Merely to refuse military service is not enough... Military service is only a symptom of the disease which is deeper. I suggest to you that those who are not on the register of military service are equally participating in the crime if they support the State otherwise. He or she who supports a State organized in the military way—whether directly or indirectly—participates in the sin. Each man, old or young, takes part in the sin by contributing to the maintenance of the State by paying the taxes. ...Refusal of military service is much more superficial than non-co-operation with the whole system which supports the State."—*Young India*, 31.12.31, p. 426.

warfare, but all the same B, whose cause is just, deserves my moral help and blessings."[267] (For a similar statement, *Harijan* 21.10.39, p. 309).

Gandhi considered righteous, and wished success to, the Spanish republicans fighting Franco, the Chinese struggling against Japan, and the Poles resisting Germany, though in each case he wished that they had offered non-violent resistance.[268]

Speaking about Nazi Germany's oppression of the Jews, he said : "If ever there could be a justifiable war in the name of and for humanity, a war against Germany, to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified. But I do not believe in any war."[269]

Dr. Power suggests that paradoxically intertwined with Gandhi's conditional pacifism are views as absolute as those of any western pacifist.[270] For instance, after the First World War, Gandhi brandished that the Great European War of 1914 was "a war of aggrandizement on either part. It was a war of dividing the spoils of the exploitation of the weaker races—otherwise euphemestically called the world commerce."[271] He alleged that the Allies had been as deceitful, cruel and selfish as Germany, and that they had become a menace to the world because of their secret treaties and military record : "...today these dictators [Hitler and Mussolini] feel satisfaction in defying world opinion because none of the so-called Great Powers can come to them with clean hands, and they have a rankling sense of injustice done to their people by the Great Powers in the past. Only the other day an esteemed English friend owned to me that Nazi Germany was England's sin and that it was the Treaty of Versailles that made Hitler."[272]

In April 1939, he wrote : "After all, what is the gain if the so-called democracies win ? War certainly will not end. The democracies will have adopted all the tactics of the Fascists and Nazis, including conscription and all other methods to compel and exact obedience. All that may be gained at the end of the victory is the possibility of comparative protection of individual liverty."[273]

During the early phase of the Second World War (from 1939 to the spring of 1942) Gandhi *generally* found nothing righteous in the Allied cause. To cite one instance: he wrote to G. D. Birla on 21.5.40: "Europe is at present the meeting ground of people gathered together for mutual destruction just as the Yadavas did. Be that as it may, my heart is hardened."[274] Any careful student of Indian freedom movement must have noticed the rigorous pacifist stand that Gandhi advocated during this period. As Maulana Azad has recorded in his *India Wins Freedom*, Gandhi's view was that India must not participate in the Second World War *in any circumstances*, even if such participation meant the achievement of Indian independence.[275]

At the meeting of the Congress Working Committee held in September 1938, Gandhi wanted the Congress to declare that a free India would eschew all violence and would have no army to defend the country against aggression. The question was again raised by him when war broke out in September 1939. At the Ramgarh meeting of the AICC (March 1940) he raised this question for the third time. The Wardha meeting of the Working Committee (June 1940) again considered his advice.[276] It is a known fact that Gandhi and the majority of the Congress leadership differed on this fundamental question.

The 'Royden affair' gives an excellent illustration of Gandhi's absolutist pacifism during World War II. When the war of 1939-45 broke out, after some weeks of agonized indecision Maude Royden, who still believed herself to be a pacifist, realized that she had no faith at all in the ability of any European or American nation to use the weapon of spiritual power. She could not help feeling that those who recognized this 'dreadful truth' and went out to fight evil with weapons they *could* use and had been trained and disciplined to use, were in the right. When Gandhi learned of her decision he rebuked her and asked her to cling to her faith in pacifism.[277] His absolutist stand was misinterpreted in certain circles to imply that he was prepared to negotiate with Japan.[278] But as he said, he had no desire to substitute any other foreign

rule for British rule. What he wanted was unadulterated non-violence. In his public letter 'To Every Japanese' he warned Japan: "I would ask you to make no mistake about the fact that you will be sadly disillusioned if you believe that you will receive a willing welcome from India. The end and aim of the movement for British withdrawal is to prepare India, by making her free for resisting all militarist and imperialist ambition, whether it is called British imperialism, German Nazism or your pattern." Referring to his appeal to Britain he added: "Our appeal to Britain is coupled with the offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India. The offer is made in order to prove that we do not in any way mean to harm the Allied cause, and in order to prevent you from being misled into feeling that you have but to step into the country that Britain has vacated. Needless to repeat that if you cherish any such idea and will carry it out, we will not fail in resisting you with all the might that our country can muster."[279]

'The offer of free India's willingness to let the Allies retain their troops in India' marked a signal change. As Nehru has recorded: "His [Gandhi's] love of freedom for India and all other exploited nations and peoples overcame even his strong adherence to non-violence. He had previously given a grudging and rather reluctant consent to the Congress not adhering to this policy in regard to defence and the State's functions in emergency, but he had kept himself aloof from this. He realized that his half-hearted attitude in this matter might well come in the way of a settlement with Britain and the United Nations. So he went further and himself sponsored a Congress resolution which declared that the primary function of the Provisional Government of Free India would be to throw all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against aggression and to co-operate fully with the United Nations in the defence of India with all the armed as well as other forces at her command."[280]

Nehru recorded later in a reflective mood: "It was no easy matter for him to commit himself in this way, but

he swallowed the bitter pill, so overpowering was his desire that some settlement should be arrived at to enable India to resist the aggressor as free nation."[281]

In his letter to Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, dated June 14, 1942,* Gandhi made it perfectly clear that India wanted to prevent in every way 'Japanese aggression'. He assured the Generalissimo : "I would personally agree, and I am sure the government of free India would agree, that the Allied powers might, under treaty with us, keep their armed forces in India and use the country as a base for operation against the threatened Japanese attack."[282]**

Of course, in the same letter he reiterated his firm faith in non-violence. But the realist politician that he was, he could realize that "India today has not that faith and belief, and the government in free India would be formed from the various elements composing the nation."[283] Asked by American journalists in June 1942 if free India would declare war against Japan, he replied : "Free India need not do so. She simply becomes the ally of the Allied powers, out of gratefulness for the payment of a debt, however overdue. Human nature thanks the debtor when he discharges the debt."[284] Whatever might have been the reason for the 'new move', it marked an important change from his earlier position as can be further illustrated from Gandhi's draft resolution for the Allahabad Working Committee meeting dated April 27, 1942, wherein it was stated : "...it is harmful to India's interests and dangerous to the cause of India's freedom to introduce foreign soldiers in India. ...It is a crying shame to bring foreign troops in spite of India's inexahustible manpower and is a proof of the immorality that British imperialism is."[285]

* Its publication was withheld at that time. It was published in *Hindusthan Times*, August 15, 1942.

** Gandhi told Louis Fischer on June 5, 1942 : "Britain and America, and other countries too, can keep their armies here and use Indian territory as a base for military operations. I do not want Japan to win the war. I do not want the Axis to win."—*A Week With Gandhi*, International Book House Ltd., Bombay, 1944, p. 26.

After being suddenly released from the prison owing to his illness on 6 May 1944, Gandhi made an offer to the Viceroy with regard to the political situation. On July 27 he wrote to Lord Wavell: "I am prepared to advise the Working Committee to declare that in view of changed conditions mass civil disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered and that *full co-operation in the war effort* should be given by the Congress, *if* a declaration of immediate Indian independence is made and a National Government responsible to the Central Assembly be formed subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India."[286] (emphases added) The offer was however rejected. But it is interesting to note that Gandhi moved a long way from his earlier stand of rigorous pacifism. One may recall that a precedent existed in Gandhi's life for the shift of his outlook on war in mid-1942-44, namely, his support to British imperialism in World War I following the earlier declarations of the *Hind Swaraj* days.

The Second World War ended in 1945 with the seed of the Third already sown. The dropping of atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 gave an indication of the shape of things to come. During this phase, we find Gandhi reverting back to unconditional pacifism. Writing two months before the end of hostilities in Europe, on March 7, 1945 to be precise, Gandhi observed: "The war will end this year or the next. It will bring victory to the Allies. The pity of it is that it will be only so-called. ...That victory will be assuredly a prelude to a deadlier war..."[287]

After the death of President Roosevelt, he cabled on 16 April a message of "condolence and congratulation" to Mrs. Roosevelt: "The latter because your illustrious husband died in harness after war had reached a point where Allied victory had become certain. He was spared the humiliating spectacle of being party to a peace which threatens to be a prelude to war bloodier still if possible."[288]

Gandhi told Mr. Ralph Coniston of the *Colliers Weekly* that war itself was a crime against God and humanity. The mention of war criminals brought forth the response that they "are no less war criminals than Hitler and Mussolini."[289]

The wanton destruction of human life that the atomic warfare introduced had serious impact on Gandhi's mind. In *Harijan* (7. 7. 46) his repulsion found its expression : "So far as I can see, the atomic bomb has deadened the finest that has sustained mankind for ages. There used to be the so-called laws of war which made it tolerable. Now we know the naked truth. War knows no law except that of might. The atom bomb brought an empty victory to the Allied arms but it resulted for the time being in destroying the soul of Japan. What has happened to the soul of the nation is yet too early to see. Forces of nature act in a mysterious manner." He suggested non-violence to fight this monster of destruction.

On February 10, 1946, *Harijan* was revived after a lapse of three years and a half. In the very first issue he addressed his readers thus :

"There have been cataclysmic changes in the world. Do I still adhere to my faith in truth and non-violence ? Has not the atom bomb exploded that faith ? Not only has it not done so but it has clearly demonstrated to me that the twins constitute the mightiest force in the world. Before it the atom bomb is of no effect. The two opposing forces are wholly different in kind, the one moral and spiritual, the other physical and material. The one is infinitely superior to the other which by its very nature has an end. The force of spirit is ever progressive and endless. Its full expression makes it unconquerable in the world. In saying this I know...I merely bear witness to the fact."[290]

From Gandhi's point of view, atomic war was all unjust because of its supreme indifference to human life and its naked violence. This absolutist position, as a matter of inherent logic, rejected current diplomatic theories of 'balance of terror' as a way out for maintaining world peace.

Gandhi told Prof. George Catlin in 1946 : "We must hold fast by non-violence. Who are we to be judges what is aggression and what is not ?"[291] This statement may be taken for an expression of absolute pacifism. One may find a parallel, as does Prof. Catlin, in Kant who held that there never had been or could be 'a just war' where there was no agreed judge to adjudicate upon what was just. "No man can be judge in his own cause."[292] Or, one may hold, keeping in view the background of the situation, that the Big Power politics thoroughly disillusioned him and as such the statement is to be read as an expression of his anguished soul.

Later again, he stood for justice and moved away from unconditional pacifism. The partition of the country on communal basis was smeared with blood and tears of millions of countrymen. 'The One Man Boundary Force' that Gandhi symbolized in himself need not be recounted here. But unfortunately, his voice of sanity and goodwill seemed to have lost its magic appeal. The brazen complacency of persons on whom rested the moral responsibility of bringing about the partition disturbed him. In the face of flagrant contravention of elementary justice by the Pakistani authorities he did not maintain a morally neutralist position. At his prayer meeting on September 26, 1947, he remarked that he had always been an opponent of all warfare. But if there was no other way of securing justice from Pakistan, if Pakistan persistently refused to see its proven error and continued to minimize it, war would be the only alternative left to Government. War was no joke. For that way lay destruction. But he could never advise anyone to put up with injustice. As for Gandhi himself, his way was different. He worshipped God, which was Truth and *ahiṃsā*.[293]

Gandhi's remarks about the possibility of war between the two Dominions, if Pakistan did not mend its ways, raised quite a storm. There were anxious telegrams. Friends in India and and abroad asked whether he had really begun to advocate war. Even Mountbatten felt perturbed. But Gandhi stuck to his position. As he was wedded to non-violence for all

time, he said, he was the last person to advocate war.* But he knew that the governments which possessed arms and armies could not act in any other way.[294]

In his prayer speech on 27 September, he said that he could never advocate war. In a State run by him there would be no police and military. But he was not running the Government of the Indian Union. He had merely pointed out the various possibilites. India and Pakistan should settle their differences by mutual consultations and failing that, fall back upon arbitration. But if one party persisted in wrong doing and would accept neither of the two ways mentioned above, the only way left open was that of war.[295]

And, further on 29 September :

"We have among us the superstition that the mere mention of a snake ensures its appearance in the house in which the mention is made even by a child. I hope no one in India entertains such superstition about war.

"I claim that I rendered a service to both the sister States by examining the present situation and definitely stating when the cause of war could arise between the two States. This was done not to promote war but to avoid it as far as possible. I endeavoured, too, to show that if the insensate murders, loot and arson by people continued, they would force the hands of their Governments. Was it wrong to draw public attention to the logical steps that inevitably followed one after another ?

"India knows, the world should, that every ounce of my energy has been and is being devoted to the definite avoidance of fratricide culminating in war. When a man vowed to non-violence as the law governing human beings dares to refer to war, he can only do it so as to strain every nerve to avoid it."[296]

A correspondent remonstrated : "It would be well not to discuss *even* by way of a joke the possibility of war between

* "At any rate, I won't be there alive to witness it", he remarked to Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, referring to the posibility of a war between India and Pakistan. "Is our independence going to end in such a fratricide ?"—Pyarelal, *The Last Phase*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1958, vol. 2, p. 696.

our two States." Gandhi replied that it was undoubtedly true that the possibility of a war between the two States should not be discussed by way of joke. But if the posibility were a reality, "it would be a duty to discuss it...folly not to do so."[297]

Gandhi expressed his appreciation of the Indian Union Government's action in rushing troops for the defence of Kashmir.[298] He said that he would not mind if the whole of the military and the people of Kashmir died at their post in defence of fair Kashmir.[299]

A correspondent rebuked him for having dared to advise Churchill, Hitler, Mussolini and the Japanese, when they were likely to lose all, that they should adopt his technique of non-violence. The writer of the letter then went on to ask that if he could give that advice when it was safe for him to do so, why did he abandon his non-violence when his own friends in the Congress Government had forsaken it and even sent armed resistance to Kashmir ? The letter concluded by inviting Gandhi to point out definitely how the raiders were to be opposed non-violently by the Kashmiris.

Gandhi answered that he had repeatedly said that he had no influence in the matter over his friends in the Union Cabinet. He held on to his views on non-violence as firmly as ever, but he could not impose his views on his best friends, as they were, in the Cabinet. He could not expect them to act against their convictions and everybody should be satisfied with his confession that he had lost his original hold upon his friends.

His *ahiṃsā* forbade him to deny credit, where it was due, even though the person to him credit had to be given was a believer in violence. Though he did not approve of the use of arms by the Union Government* for aiding the

* Referring to despatch of troops to Kashmir, Nehru said publicly in March 1948 after Gandhi's death : "It has been and is a moral issue with us, apart from other aspects of the case, and because of this, at every stage and at every step, I consulted Mahatma Gandhi and had his approval."—*Independence and After*, The Publications Division, Govt. of India, 1949, p.83.

Gandhi told Vincent Sheean ['of the campaign in Kashmir, no doubt'] in 1948 : "Look at what India is doing now. And with my tacit consent. I cannot deny that it is with my tacit consent."—*Lead, Kindly Light*, Random House, New York, 1949, p. 189.

Kashmiris and though he could not approve of the Kashmiris resorting to arms, he could not possibly withold, on that account, his admiration for either the Union Government or the Kashmiris for their resourcefulness and praiseworthy conduct, especially if both the relieving troops and the Kashmiri defenders died heroically to a man. He knew that if they could do so, they would perhaps change the face of India. But if the defence was purely non-violent in intention and action, he would not use the word 'perhaps', for, he would be sure of change in the face of India even to the extent of converting to the defenders' view the Union Cabinet, if not even the Pakistan Cabinet.[300]

Sum-up

The outline-survey given above of Gandhi's views on war during different phases of his public career suggests that Gandhi consistently believed that the actual process of war was unrighteous because it violated *ahiṃsā*, 'the supreme law of our being'. "The children of violence will commit suicide and perish unless they turn away from violence", he told M. Cartier in a discussion on war.[301] However, his views differed on whether the belligerents could be just.

As an unconditional pacifist, he held that participants in war were not righteous and that nothing of value was produced from armed conflict. This point of view can be traced in his ideas during the period 1909-14, in his observations about western democracies immediately after the Great European War of 1914 and during the early years of the Second World War. His condemnation of atomic warfare was also without any reservation and equivocation.

It may seem baffling to one's understanding, or one may ascribe confusion to Gandhi himself, that while maintaining his unqualified pacifist position during the early phase of the Second World War, he proclaimed his sympathy for the Allied cause. And how could he do that when he held

the opinion that western democracies were no better than fascism ?*

Let us try to solve the riddle, if it is such at all.

First, his sympathy with England and France was not of a political nature ; it was purely from the humanitarian standpoint, as he repeatedly asserted.[302] Secondly, his pronouncement that there was no distinction between imperialism and Nazism-Fascism was an expression of his overall judgment of imperialism and Fascism as *systems*, both of which are based on exploitation and violence. This should not be confused with the *relative* justness of the cases of the contestants. Gandhi wrote : "Rightly or wrongly, and irrespective of what the other powers have done before, under similar circumstances, I have come to the conclusion that Herr Hitler is responsible for the war."[303]

That explains why he extended his *moral* sympathy—it was not a question of material co-operation with the Allies—for the Allied cause even at the period when he maintained a rigorous pacifist position.

As a conditional pacifist he found that justice rested with one party and as he could not tolerate injustice to prevail he lent his sympathy to the party upholding the cause of justice though he did not approve of the means of armed warfare in resisting aggression. Evidence of this position is seen in his debates with the western pacifists, and in a number of his comments during the 1930s when he endorsed the cause of the victims of Nazi tyranny and fascist-militarist aggression. This sense of justice again impelled him immediately after the political transfer of power in India and Pakistan to point out the inevitable possibility of war, if Pakistan did not heed the voice of reason. That justice should not suffer was his main point. And then again he could not withhold his admiration for the brave Kashmiri defenders and the Indian military for the defence of that land. This position of assertive and qualified pacifism can be best appreciated if we take into consideration the dynamic non-violence which is to be sharply distinguished

* For his opinion on Euramerican democracies, see pp. 396 ff. *supra*.

from passive inaction.* "The first condition of non-violence is justice", he remarked. Reinhold Niebuhr is mistaken when he alleges that Gandhi's ethic of love is divorced from justice.[304] Gandhi's non-violence, it may be recalled here, recognized different species of violence—defensive and offensive. And a non-violent person, he observed, is bound to say, when the occasion arises, which side is just.[305]

The third approach of Gandhi to war represents 'the flexible adjustment of his idealism to the demands of his nationalism'. Evidence of this approach is found in comments during World War I, in subsequent explanations for aiding the British Empire, and later during mid-1942 when he conceded that free India might be used as an operation base for the United Nations. This flexibility of approach speaks of 'his intense and manysided realism'.

Gandhi disclaimed any motive of expediency on his part in participating in World War I and asserted that his motive was peace and that he was actuated in the interest of non-violence. What Gandhi really meant was that even violence was justified if the cause was moral. But he was equally insistent that non-violence was usually the better method of establishing a moral cause. As Niebuhr says: "He is probably right on both counts."[306]

The fundamental consideration that weighed with him during this phase was, in our opinion, his sense of loyalty to the British Empire and his belief in the goodness of the Empire. The shift in his attitude regarding India's participation in war during mid-1942 suggests that *political* considerations, not merely humanitarian as was the case during 1938-40, might have played a part. Nehru has recorded: "Our mutual discussions led to a clarification of much that had been vague and cloudy, and to Gandhiji appreciating many international

* "...a false antithesis having been made between peace and justice, Christian pacifists in most cases chose a passive conception of peace. ...It is from this ethical fog that Gandhiji has done much, at last, to rescue us."—Reginald Reynolds, 'Mahatma Gandhi and Christian Pacifism' in Kshitis Roy (ed.), *Gandhi Memorial Peace Number*, The Visva-Bharati Quarterly, Santiniketan, 1949, pp. 137, 141.

factors to which his attention had been drawn. His subsequent writings underwent a change and he himself emphasized these international considerations and looked at India's problem in a wider perspective. But his fundamental attitude remained."[307]

The predominant element that one finds in his philosophy is objective and non-absolute non-violence. However idealist Gandhi's world outlook might have been, he was objective enough to realize that the prime cause of war was the inhuman race for exploitation of the weaker nations of the earth by a few stronger nations.* This sense of objectivity has indeed distinguished him from the ranks of absolute pacifists. A pacifist is neutral *a priori*. A pacifist's neutrality is an evasion of moral responsibility, not the sublime detachment of a god who stands 'above the battle'. Behind such neutrality lies a fundamental moral irresponsibility. Objectivity, on the other hand, is responsibility. This sense of objectivity and moral responsibility enabled him to take political decisions, not *fundamentally* opposed to his basic convictions of truth and non-violence. He was, however, even as non-pacifists and Marxists are, on common ground with pacifists in believing that the inevitable cruelties of war were not in themselves creative and that only positive goodwill could bring a new society into existence.

We have seen above that Gandhi's concept of non-violence was integrally related to justice. But did he believe, as the socialists do, in 'just' war ? 'Just' war implies the moral and social justification of the use of violence inasmuch as it is a measure of defence on the part of the majority of the community or the victims of the aggression against the horrors of war, poverty and exploitation, and aims at establishing a new society free from exploitation. While Gandhi would uphold the cause of justice and throw his full weight against aggression and exploitation he would not, however, approve of the violent means employed in such a 'just' war, nor would he participate in such a war, for allegiance to non-violence was a fundamental creed with him.

* See p. 430 *supra*.

On Peace

Gandhi has often been described as an apostle of peace. Certainly he was. He strove and died for peace. He advocated 'peace—but not at any price', for his philosophy was a philosophy of commitment—it was based upon the concept of moral responsibility, as well as that of 'peace at any price' which underlay his ethic of intention.[308]* This may sound paradoxical. But he moved, Dr. Power rightly observes, from 'truth to truth' through a tangle of paradoxes.[309]

Gandhi's philosophy of peace is to be sharply distinguished from the conservative plea for 'peace at any cost' which is in essence a plea for the maintenance of *status quo*. Peace, he advocated, is integrally related to justice. As he wrote : "Peace must be just."[310] Peace is not mere cessation of hostilities. Gandhi did not share the diplomatic view of peace.** Peace for him connoted a positive state of affairs, the pre-condition being freedom from exploitation. What he advocated was non-violent and just peace which alone, in his opinion, could ensure lasting peace.

Let us proceed to see what constitutes, in his opinion, the secret of peace and the way for establishing it.

As an earnest believer in the universality of *satyāgraha* he wrote in *Young India* (23. 6. 1919) : "It may be long before the law of love will be recognized in international affairs. The machineries of governments stand between and hide the hearts of one people from those of another. Yet...we could see how the world is moving steadily to realize that between nation and nation, as between man and man, force has failed to solve problems, but that the economic sanction of Non-co-operation is far more mighty and conclusive than armies and navies."[311]

* "I am a man of peace. I believe in peace. But I do not want peace at any price. ...I do not want the peace that you find in the grave ; but I do want that peace which you find embedded in the human breast, which is exposed to the arrows of a whole world but which is protected from all harm by the power of the Almighty God."—*Young India*, 19. 1. 22 in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, The Publications Division, Govt. of India, 1966, vol. 22, p. 104.

** The thesis that peace is not, and never can be a direct object of policy, is developed at great length in Edward Hallett Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis*, Macmillan and Company Ltd., London, 1940, pp. 68-9 ; see also the same author, *Conditions of Peace*, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., London 1944, p. xxiii.

He asserted: "It may take long to lay the wires for international love, but the sanction of international Non-co-operation in preference to continued physical compulsion...is a distinct progress towards the ultimate and real solution."[312]

The Italian invasion of Abyssinia moved Gandhi to send a message to the Editor of *The Cosmopolitan*, New York, which was one of the first of his appeals against the wave of darkness that was to sweep the whole world:

"Not to believe in the possibility of permanent peace is to disbelieve in the godliness of human nature. Methods hitherto adopted have failed because rock-bottom sincerity on the part of those who have striven has been lacking. Not that they have not realized this lack. Peace is unattainable by part performance of conditions, even as a chemical combination is impossible without complete fulfilment of conditions of attainment thereof. If the recognized leaders of mankind who have control over the engines of destruction were wholly to renounce their use, with full knowledge of its implications, permanent peace can be attained. This is clearly impossible without the great powers of the earth renouncing their imperialistic designs. This again seems impossible without these great nations ceasing to believe in soul-destroying competition and to desire to multiply wants and, therefore, increase their material possessions."[313]

Gandhi explained his concept of non-violent peace while talking to the Christian missionaries in early December 1938: "Peace will never come until the Great Powers courageously decide to disarm themselves. It seems to me that recent events must force that belief on the Great Powers. I have an implicit faith—a faith that today burns brighter than ever, after half a century's experience of unbroken practice of non-violence—that mankind can only be saved through non-violence..."[314]

"There will be no peace", Gandhi reiterated his conviction on the eve of San Francisco Conference, "for the Allies or the world unless they shed their belief in the efficacy of war and its accompanying terrible deception and fraud and are determined to hammer out real peace based on freedom and equality of all races and nations. Exploitation and domination of one nation over

another can have no place in a world striving to put an end to all wars. In such a world only the militarily weaker nations will be free from the fear of intimidation or exploitation."[315]

Similarly, he told a director of an influential British daily paper in 1946: "I have no doubt that unless big nations shed their desire of exploitation and the spirit of which war is the natural expression and atom bomb the inevitable consequence, there is no hope for peace in the world."[316]

What did Gandhi think of the various devices for bringing or maintaining peace? Arbitration, world government, international organization, disarmament and world police and defence force are the traditional solutions suggested for preventing aggression.

Gandhi's preferred method of resolving inter-state questions was what he called 'arbitration'.* "How I wish Herr Hitler would respond to the appeal of the President of the United States and allow his claim to be investigated by arbitrators in whose choice he will have as effective voice as the disputants!"[317] Incidentally, Roosevelt did not mention 'arbitration', nor did he suggest a disinterested panel selected by the disputants. He said that his message came from a 'friendly intermediary', not even a 'mediator', asking Hitler to promise not to attack specified European nations for a minimum of ten years, and called himself a 'post office' that would secure guarantees from other powers.[318]

Gandhi indicted Hitler for his refusal to 'arbitrate' German claims to Danzig and the Polish corridor. "I do not judge his claim. It is highly probable that his right to incorporate Germany is beyond question, if the Danzig Germans desire to give up their independent status. It may be that his claim is a just claim. My complaint is that he will not let the claim be examined by an impartial tribunal."[319]

* "International Arbitration was defined by the Hague Convention of 1907 as the settlement of disputes between states by judges of their own choice and on the basis of the respect for law. This definition seems too narrow, for arbitration includes every submission of a dispute to final decision by an impartial judge or court."—*Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 157.

By 'arbitration', Gandhi meant any informal effort by a third party to mediate, conciliate or use good offices.

Technically, Roosevelt's appeal was not for arbitration. But Gandhi was not much interested about the procedural devices of international diplomacy ; he was more interested in the spirit of the matter and as such, Roosevelt's offer to act as a 'post office' impressed him.

On national questions Gandhi did not favour third-party settlement for resolving disputes. Referring to the question of linguistic redistribution of provinces, he said in his prayer speech on January 25, 1948, that he hoped that Indians would not need a Boundary Commission to delimit the frontiers on the new basis. That was the foreign way which Indians had discarded, he added. The best thing in his opinion, would be for themselves to determine the boundaries on the new basis by mutual agreement and consent. To go to a third party in the shape of a Boundary Commission for a settlement would be a negation of independence, he held.[320] Nevertheless, he supported the arbitration of debt between free India and the United Kingdom.[321] We find him again as an advocate of arbitration when the question relating to the right or wrong of the Junagadh episode was posed. He observed that appeal to the sword was not to be thought of. The only honourable way out, in his opinion, was the ancient method of arbitration in the usual manner. What Gandhi said about Junagadh applied equally to Kashmir and Hyderabad.[322]

As is well known, Gandhi was no enthusiastic admirer of legal positivism. If we bear in mind his general attitude towards the Great Powers, then it would not be of much difficulty to appreciate his reservations about the efficacy of international law as an instrument for the solution of inter-state disputes. Commenting on the Kellogg Pact of 1928—which 'renounced war as an instrument of national policy' but preserved the right of western nations, e.g. Great Britain, France, and the U.S.A., to take up arms in defence of their interests in certain regions which they considered 'vital' to their welfare—Gandhi wrote : "I have no difficulty in agreeing that the Kellogg Pact has great possibilities, the

patent insincerity of many signatories notwithstanding. ...The parties to the Pact are mostly partners in the exploitation of the peoples of Asia and Africa. ...The Peace Pact, therefore, in substance means a desire to carry on the joint exploitation peacefully."[323]

But this unfavourable reaction towards international treaties etc., should not be construed to mean that he was indifferent to the problems of inter-state obligation and the citizens' duty as individuals to maintain world peace. As we have seen above in our discussion of his views on rights and duties, he maintained that the very right to live accrues to us only when we do the duty of citizenship of the world. For Gandhi, it was a question of man's moral responsibility to build a new world free from the horrors of war.

Gandhi fervently hoped for "a world federation of free and independent States."[324]* The Western declarations in the Atlantic Charter did not inspire him because the Charter was based on a denial of the right to self-determination of the subject peoples of the British Empire. Churchill made it explicit that this Charter had no application to India. Pat came the answer from Gandhi : "It went down the ocean as soon as it was born !"[325]

Gandhi's concept of world government transcended the traditional thinking ; the pattern of conventional international organizations could not satisfy the conditions for bringing in genuine peace. He held that "Peace cannot be established through mere conferences."[326] One may recall here Tolstoy's review and forceful criticism of the London Peace Congress of 1890 to the effect that the state system based on power is beyond reform by either public or private initiative.[327] Dr. Power suggests that Gandhi's ideas about the League of Nations, the United Nations, etc., show the influence of his dedication to self-help and to anti-colonialism, and of 'weak internationalist tendencies in his composite world-view'. Also, the critical attitude of Tolstoy towards international peace efforts might have influenced Gandhi.[328] While the analysis is acceptable in its

* See also pp. 422-3 *supra*.

broad outline, a point however is to be controverted. The criticism relating to 'weak internationalist tendencies' betrays non-recognition of the objective background of Gandhi's reservations about international bodies ; besides, the criticism does not take into account the integral relationship of nationalism and internationalism that was advocated by Gandhi. It should be repeated here that internationalism was not an abstract concept for Gandhi ; it was a question of attainment which could only be possible through freedom of India and of the other subject peoples of Asia and Africa.

Hakim Saheb Ajmal Khan and Dr. Ansari, on their return from a prolonged tour of the Continent including Syria, drew the attention of Gandhi to 'the utter callousness of the French and their utter disregard for the elementary rights of the people of the mandated territory in Syria' and requested him 'to send', as the President of the Congress, a 'cable to the League of Nations which has granted this mandate to France'. Gandhi could not see his way to accept their advice. He scathingly criticized the Great Powers : "I do not believe in making appeals when there is no force behind them, whether moral or material... And what is the League of Nations ? Is it not in reality merely England and France ? Do the other Powers count ? Is it any use appealing to France which is denying her motto of Fraternity, Equality and Justice ?...If we would appeal to England, we need not go to the League of Nations. ...But to appeal to her is to appeal to Caesar against Augustus." He then added, "Relief of Syria lies through India."[329] Gandhi exposed the hollowness of the pretensions of Anglo-French powers and correctly pointed out that Indian freedom from foreign domination could only be a lever for extending moral and material support to another nation groaning under the heels of colonial—mandatory administration was a courteous figure of speech—subjugation. It speaks of his realistic sense, and not of his 'weak internationalist tendencies' as has been alleged. Incidentally, Lenin also taught that genuine internationalism rests on intensification of national struggle against imperialism wherever it is entrenched.

Gandhi, we agree with Dr. Amiya Chakravorty, defined the right perspective and gave a new sense of proportion. He made the Indians aware of the true basis of internationalism.[330]

The League of Nations could not effectively assert itself as the genuine guarantee against war. Gandhi criticized the League when he visited its headquarters at Geneva in 1931 for its failure to 'enforce peace' as the League was pledged to do.[331] During the Italian invasion of Abyssinia (1934-36) Gandhi could not remain indifferent to the situation. He wrote in an article, 'The Greatest Force', in *Harijan* (12.10.35): "If Abyssinia were non-violent she would have no arms, would want none. She would make no appeal to the League or any other power for an armed intervention. She would never give any cause for complaint. And Italy would find nothing to conquer if the Abyssinians would not offer armed resistance, *nor would they give co-operation, willing or forced.*"[332] (emphasis added) It was an advice of non-violent resistance to and non-co-operation with the aggressor.

Referring to Gandhi's stand vis-à-vis this war, Dr. Power offers a comment which we fail to persuade ourselves to accept: "He [Gandhi] had no suggestions to offer the League, other than to imply that it should employ no sanctions against Italy. ...Throughout the Ethiopian crisis he failed to appreciate that the League's economic penalties against Italy were non-violent and similar to his own economic boycotts against British imperialism."[333] Since Gandhi had no high hopes about the effectivness of the League as an instrument for ushering in world peace, it was not quite illogical on Gandhi's part to abstain from offering suggestions. The reading of *implications* in Gandhi's taking up such a position is Dr. Power's own, and that, after all, is a matter of opinion. But we join issue with the learned professor when he equates the League Sanctions with non-violent non-co-operation.

Let us be permitted to recapitulate here the basic Gandhian concept in this regard. It was a fundamental position with Gandhi that he preferred 'international non-co-

operation' to 'continued physical compulsion', and that clarifies the concept of non-violent resistance. Non-violent resistance, right or wrong, whatever it may prove to be in the future, was no half-hearted gesture on Gandhi's part. The 'economic sanction of non-co-operation' that he advocated was based on a distinct philosophy of non-violence, while the professed declaration of the League to 'enforce peace' was, at its best, 'a little more than gesture' and at its worst, a device of hoodwinking the war-weary world. While we need not go into the details of the case, let us recall a few of the salient points in connexion with the sanctions imposed against Italy for its violation of the Covenant of the League. Article XVI of the Covenant laid down that in circumstances of any Power's resorting to war contrary to its undertaking in the Covenant, severance of all trade or financial relations, etc., should follow. The only occasion on which the imposition of Sanctions by members of the League was attempted was in October 1935, when Italy by her wanton invasion of Abyssinia rendered herself irrevocably liable to those. The defining of the scope and administration of the Sanctions were entrusted to a Co-ordination Committee, which imposed an embargo on the exports of arms and ammunitions, including a prohibition on the supply of certain commodities to Italy. It should be noted that petroleum, iron and steel, coal and coke, *all essential* to Italy *in the conduct of the war were*, however, *not included*. A proposal was made that the export of these commodities also should be prohibited, but this proposal was smothered. In these circumstances Sanctions were little more than a gesture, and by April 1936 the Governments that had imposed them began to reverse their policy.[334] Such, in short, is the story of the League's 'economic penalties'. One may rightly conclude that "The fundamental notion that the League sanctions constituted a practical instrument of pacification was erroneous."[335] Does the criticism alleging failure on Gandhi's part to 'appreciate' the efficacy of the League Sanctions stand the test of objectivity? We, however, feel that it is rather difficult for a Westerner

to appreciate the concrete significance of world peace in the context of colonial dependence.

The United Nations Organization which was set up in 1945 at the San Francisco Conference could not evoke Gandhi's unqualified approval. He had strong reservations about the future of the organization. He was rather pessimistic about the realization of the professed goals, viz. maintenance of international peace and security, and achieving international co-operation on economic, social, cultural and humanitarian questions. In a statement published on April 18, 1945, Gandhi said : "I very much fear that behind the structure of world security sought to be raised lurk mistrust and fear which breed war."[336] He added, "An indispensable preliminary to peace is the complete freedom of India from all foreign control... Freedom of India will demonstrate to all the exploited races of the earth that their freedom is very near, and that in no case will they henceforth be exploited."

In reply to a question by Doon Campbell of *Reuter* as to whether Gandhi believed that the United Nations Organization, as at present constituted, could maintain a lasting peace, he said that he was afraid that the world was heading towards another showdown. "But if all goes well with India, then the world may have a long peace. It will largely depend on... British statesmanship."[337]

A few months hence, Gandhi spoke of the failure of the United Nations to Vincent Sheean.[338]

The reference of the Indo-Pak dispute on Kashmir to the U. N. and Gandhi's advice on the issue have been subjected to various readings. Alan Campbell-Johnson implies that Gandhi gave prior approval to the Indian Union Government's decision of December 30, 1947, to make a formal reference to the Security Council of UN with regard to Pakistan's aggression on Kashmir.[339] But Pyarelal, a close associate of Gandhi, records that "Gandhiji was not enamoured of taking any Indo-Pakistan dispute to an outside organisation. It would only get them 'monkey justice', he warned."[340] Were the Union and Pakistan always to depend on a third party to settle their disputes ? —he

asked in course of his post-prayer address on December 25.[341] He pleaded for an amicable settlement with the assistance of impartial Indians.[342] He pleaded for amity and goodwill which would enable the Union's representation to the UNO to be withdrawn with dignity. This, he was sure, the UNO itself would welcome.[343] Pyarelal notes that Gandhi had never concealed his disapproval of the Indian Union's taking the Kashmir dispute to the UNO instead of treating it as a domestic issue which ought to have been settled amongst themselves. But Gandhi did not wish to confuse those who were handling the question in the way they thought to be best by dividing their mind. So, when India's representative to the UNO, Gopalaswamy Ayyengar, came to see him prior to his departure for the U. S. A. to represent there India's case during the debate on Kashmir, Gandhi said to him : "You must understand that your way and mine are different. You should, therefore, either make up your mind to follow my path and settle the issue by direct negotiations, using the good offices of anyone you like from amongst ourselves or, if necessary, with the help of any country in Asia, or frankly and openly take an independent line."[344] It is significant that while he was agreeable to the extent of seeking help from any Asiatic country for settlement of the dispute, he did not mention the UN mediation as a formula for coming to such a settlement. It suggests that he was not much optimistic about the UNO.*

Gandhi believed that the doctrine of non-violence held good in the matter of relationship between states and states also. This conviction impelled him to unequivocally recommend total disarmament—unilateral or multilateral. His idea of disarmament is to be distinguished from the Western Powers' plea for progressive disarmament, a policy suited to the interests of 'security' of national states. In 1925 he wrote to a German correspondent : "It would be found that before general

* But H. N. Brailsford gives a somewhat different impression : "While we talked of Pakistan, Gandhi said that, if no other method of solution succeeded, he was prepared to submit the whole issue to international arbitration."—'Gandhiji on New Spirit', *Harijan*, 14.4.46, p. 91, reproduced from *The Hindu*, Madras.

disarmament in Europe commences, as it must some day, unless Europe is to commit suicide, some nation will have to disarm herself and take large risks. The level of non-violence in that nation, if that event happily comes to pass, will naturally have risen so high as to command universal respect. Her judgments will be unerring, her decisions will be firm, her capacity for heroic self-sacrifice will be great, and she will want to live as much for other nations as for herself."[345]

He was optimistic enough to advocate unilateral disamament : "If even one great nation were unconditionally to perform the supreme act of renunciation, many of us would see in our lifetime visible peace established on earth."[346]

His call for unilateral disarmament betrayed his idealism, while the realist Gandhi appreciated that with the establishment of a democratic world federation disarmament would be practicable in all countries.[347]

He believed that disarmament was possible only through "the matchless weapon of non-violence."[348] And it was his hope that "India will...prove herself worthy of being the first nation in the world" to give a lead to other nations for "the delivery of the earth from the burden" of war.[349]

Gandhi's anxiety for disarmament may be illustrated from his reply to a Swiss friend's question :

"Q. Since disarmament chiefly depends on great powers why should Switzerland, which is a small State and a neutral State, be asked to disarm itself ?

A. It is from the neutral ground of your country that I am speaking to all other powers and not only to Switzerland : ...And seeing that Switzerland is a neutral territory and non-aggressive nation, there is all the more reason why Switzerland should not need an army."[350]

Gandhi knew that the great powers could hardly be expected in ordinary circumstances to move spontaneously in a direction the reverse of which they had so long followed. But an incorrigible optimist that he was, he did not give up hope : "It is, however, open to the great powers to take it up any day and cover themselves with glory and earn the

eternal gratitude of posterity. If they or any of them can shed the fear of destruction, if they disarm themselves, they will automatically help the rest to regain their sanity. But then these great powers have to give up ambitions and exploitation of the so-called uncivilized or semi-civilized nations of the earth and revise their mode of life. It means a complete revolution."[351]

The key point that one finds in Gandhi's views on disarmament is that real disarmament cannot come unless the nations of the world cease to exploit one another. Exploitation must go—that is the essential pre-condition for the establishment of a world free from blood-spilling and destruction.

It is significant that his view on world police force as an agency for maintaining peace and repelling aggression had undergone an evolution. As late as 1938 he denied that such as agency would be an advance over the conventional way of settling disputes through armed might. During the Second World War his views were modified, though the reservations were there. His endorsement of 'a world federal defence force' as envisaged in the historic August (1942) Resolution was a significant departure. His letter to Maurice Frydman dated 28. 7. 42 may also be cited as an instance.* In 1946 he told Prof. Catlin: "If, of course, we *could* get a really impartial body, then we would all welcome a world police force."[352] "By the time", Gandhi held at the same time, "that men have been educated to be impartial in the use of force, they can be educated in non-violence."[353]

This showed, as has been observed by Prof. Catlin, his willingness to be plastic, to compromise in matters of detail, once the principle was accepted, or once it was not involved.[354]

Gandhi flung a challenge before the world in advocating *satyāgraha* as the sure and potent weapon of combating inter-state aggression. Satyāgraha is universally applicable, he held. Non-violence, according to Gandhi, excludes war and ushers in peace.

* See p. 423 *supra* for the text of the letter.

Gandhi's ideas about peace suggest that the solution he offered for effecting world peace transcended the frontiers of international diplomacy. The chief limitation of international diplomacy is that it is based upon recognition of the power-system. The Gandhian way claims to stand for non-violent and non-exploitative social order which alone can ensure just and enduring peace. Dr. Ralph Bunche observed : "The United Nations approach to world problems is very similar to the Gandhian approach."[355] This statement of the world-famous mediator, albeit his sincerity, does not commend itself for agreement. The United Nations—however useful it may be in certain aspects, and it is certainly a marked improvement upon the previous international organizations—cannot be credited even with giving a lead in the direction of moving towards a 'world without war'. "The world of tomorrow will be, must be, a society based on non-violence", Gandhi asserted.[356] The United Nations, because of its very inherent constitution, is not in a position to advocate such an order of future society. While Gandhi pointed towards "a distant goal, an impractical Utopia", although it was, according to him, "not in the least unobtainable," the UN has been engaged in crying for peace giving the least shock to the foundation of power-politics.[357]

One may argue that the Gandhian declarations on peace contain some practical difficulties for them to be implemented in the present-day world. But Gandhi would not countenance such a 'practical' difficulty. He would counterpose by saying : If an individual can practise non-violence, why not whole groups of individuals and whole nations ? He believed that one must make a beginning and the rest would follow. The Gandhian concept of world peace should be viewed as an integral part of his philosophy of life and one should try to appreciate his attitude within the general framework of his philosophy of *ahiṃsā*. Once the postulates of his doctrine of *ahiṃsā* are accepted, one finds no difficulty in comprehending the logical application of that doctrine in the realm of international relations. But if the postulates themselves are unacceptable, his concept of peace, *ipso facto*, loses its appeal. The

question should, therefore, be treated at a fundamental level.

However 'utopian' Gandhi's plea for unilateral disarmament might be, one must concede that this idea has caught the imagination of many people. The demand for unilateral disarmament is no longer an idealist's fad ; it has assumed the proportion of a mass movement in Europe. And in the sense of kindling that faith, Gandhi had a definite contribution to the cause of world peace.

Secondly, one may point out that Gandhi's approach was essentially subjective as also idealistic in philosophical outlook : as he wrote—"If there were no greed, there would be no armaments"* But his insight did not fail him, as we have argued earlier, to spotlight the canker of Power-dominated world. This was of no mean significance when the olive branch was held aloft by the imperialist powers only to conceal the standard of Eagle from public view.

Rāma Rājya or Perfect Society

Rāma Rājya embodied Gandhi's dream of the perfectibility of man and society. The term *Rāma Rāj* derives from the *Rāmāyaṇa's* classic depiction of the victory of Rāma, symbolizing the forces of good, over Rāvaṇa, symbolizing the forces of evil[358] and the consequent establishment of a reign of righteousness and justice in the land. Gandhi's reference to *Rāma Rāj* aroused fear and suspicion in the minds of the Muslims and provoked a host of critics to aver that he wanted to go back to the mythical Golden Age. We have seen at the very outset that as a medium of communication with the common people he employed traditional terms and gave them new meanings, as he himself admitted.

In his presidential address at the Third Kathiawad Political Conference held at Bhavanagar, Jannuary 8, 1925, Gandhi said : "Rama did justice even to a dog. By abandoning his kingdom and living in the forest for the sake of truth Rama gave to all the kings of the world an object-lesson in noble

* See p. 430 *supra*.

conduct. By his strict monogamy he showed that a life of perfect self-restraint could be led by a royal householder. He lent splendour to his throne by his popular administration and proved that *Ramarajya* was the acme of Swaraj. Rama did not need the very imperfect modern instrument of ascertaining public opinion by counting votes. He had captivated the heart of the people. He knew public opinion by intuition as it were. The subjects of Rama were supremely happy. Such *Ramarajya* is possible even today. The race of Rama is not extinct. In modern times the first Caliphs may be said to have established *Ramarajya*. Abubaker and Hazrat Umar collected revenue running into crores and yet personally they were as good as fakirs."[359]

But later, Gandhi reformulated his concept. In 1927 he said : "I assure you will find nothing therein [Gandhi's heart] but love for Rama whom I see face to face in the starving millions of India."[360] This is an instance of his utilizing a mythical symbol in the interest of public service. Further in 1947 : "Rama, Krishna etc. are called incarnations of God because we attribute divine qualities to them. In truth they are creations of man's imagination. Whether they actually lived or not does not affect the picture of them in men's minds. The Rama and Krishna of history often present difficulties which have to be overcome by all manner of arguments."[361] And, "My Rama, the Rama of our prayers, is not the historical Rama, the son of Dasaratha, the king of Ayodhya. He is the eternal, the unborn, the one without a second."[362]

The picture of *Rāma Rājya* that Gandhi visualized was an expression of his yearning for a just and perfect society—the Kingdom of Righteousness on earth. *Rāma Rāj* meant more than Svarāj[363] or political self-government.

In 1929 he wrote : "I warn my Musalman friends against misunderstanding me in my use of the words 'Ramaraj'. By Ramaraj I do not mean Hindu Raj. I mean by Ramaraj Divine Raj, the Kingdom of God. For me Rama and Rahim are one and the same deity. I acknowledge no other God but the one God of truth and rightness. Whether Rama of my

imagination ever lived or not on this earth, the ancient ideal of Ramaraj is undoubtedly one of true democracy in which the meanest citizen could be sure of swift justice without an elaborate and costly procedure."[364]

That he did not advocate Hindu Rāj but the Kingdom of Righteousness, may be illustrated from many of his statements made towards the close of his life.[365]

Referring to the criticism of the term *Rāma Rāj* for his ideal society, he said : "It is a convenient and expressive phrase, the meaning of which no alternative can so fully express to millions. When I visit the Frontier province or address predominantly Muslim audience I would express my meaning to them by calling it Khudai Raj, while to a Christian audience I would describe it as Kingdom of God on earth."[366]

In 1937, Gandhi described *Rāmarāj* as sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority, as distinguished from the British, Soviet or Nazi system of rule.[367]

Later, Gandhi added a concrete meaning to the term. In an editorial on 'Independence' (*Harijan*, 5.5.46) he wrote :

"Friends have repeatedly challenged me to define independence. At the risk of repetition, I must say that independence of my dream means *Rama-Rajya* i.e., the Kingdom of God on earth. I do not know what it will be like in heaven. I have no desire to know the distant scene. If the present is attractive enough, the future cannot be very unlike.

"In concrete terms, then, the independence should be political, economic and moral.

" 'Political' necessarily means the removal of the control of British army in every shape and form.

" 'Economic' means entire freedom from the British capitalists and capital, as also their Indian counterpart. In other words, the humblest must feel equal to the tallest.* This can take place only by capital or the capitalists sharing their skill and capital with the lowliest and the least.

* "*Ramarajya* of my dream ensures rights alike of prince and pauper."—*The Amrita Bazar Patrika*. 2.8.34, in Nirmal Kumar Bose, *Selections From Gandhi*, Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad, 1957, 301, p. 91.

" 'Moral' means freedom from armed defence forces. My conception of *Rama-Rajya* excludes replacement of the British army by a national army of occupation. A country that is governed by even its national army can never be morally free and, therefore, its so-called weakest member can never rise to his full moral height."[368] (His concept of the 'square of Swaraj' may be recalled here. See p. 372 *supra*.)

Nearly a year before he made the above statement he drew a similar picture of *Ramā Rājya*.

"Q. What is Rama-Rajya ?

A. It can be religiously translated as Kingdom of God on Earth ; politically translated it is perfect democracy in which inequalities based on possession and non-posseession, colour, race or creed or sex vanish. In it, land and state belong to the people, justice is prompt, perfect and cheap and, therefore, there is freedom of worship, speech and the Press—all this because of the reign of the self-imposed law of moral restraint.

Such a State must be based on Truth and Non-violence, and must consist of prosperous, happy and self-contained villages and village communities. It is a dream that may never be realized. I find happiness in living in that dreamland, ever trying to realize it in the quickest way."[369]

Gandhi held that "There can be no *Ramarajya* in the present state of iniquitous inequalities in which a few roll in riches and the masses do not get even enough to eat."[370]

The political transfer of power in India did not enthuse him. In a prayer speech dated 2.12.47 he said that "the independence of today stifled him. It was unreal and unstable."[371] He looked beyond the present for the State that would belong to the people. His pronouncements on the subject made during the last days of his life indicate that he improved upon his earlier abstract concept.

To sum up : Rāma Rāj, notwithstanding its religious tenor and nostalgic reference, stands for an egalitarian non-violent democratic order, with moral values forming the base of such an order.[372] Gandhi did not like the ancient myth to be transformed into a reality, but at the same time he envisioned

a future which transcends the present to become a reality. Whether this 'utopia' is realizable through the method he advocated is a matter of sharp controversy, for it is a question of one's intellectual preference ; but the urge behind this vision can hardly be ignored. It truly inspires.

Gandhian Ideal of State : A Comparative Evaluation

Gandhi's ultimate ideal was stateless society. Self-government, according to him, means continuous effort to be independent of government control.[373] Anarchism, despite many distinct conceptions and tendencies within its fold, stands for the elimination of state as an institution and its replacement by an entirely free and spontaneous co-operation among individuals, groups, regions and nations. While Anarchism stands for the abolition of the state, Marxian Communist ideal is the withering away of the state. Anarchism, Marxian Communism and Gandhism stand on a common philosophic ground, the underlying sentiment being the establishment of *jus naturale*. But the difference between Marxism and Anarchism is so fundamental in their respective attitudes towards man, society, politics and in the application of methods that the two schools of thought stand at the farthest remove from each other. It is not, however, necessary in our study to go into that age-old controversy. What is relevant here is to assess, as briefly as possible, Gandhi's ideal of state in relation to these two political philosophies.

We have seen above (p. 377) that Gandhi did not approach the problem of power from a class point of view on which the Marxian theory of state puts its primary emphasis. Briefly summed up, the Marxian political and state doctrine is as follows :

1. The *state* is the product of the irreconcilable class antagonism and the instrument of oppression by which the ruling class holds down the subject and exploited classes. The state is therefore by no means an instrument of class reconciliation poised *above* classes and parties, as is put across the masses of the people through the phrase 'civil truce'.

2. The *public power* erected by the ruling class (standing army, police, prisons, and so on) is strengthened in proportion to the sharpening of the class antagonism within the state. It acts by force, internally and externally (the plunder policy of imperialist states).

3. *The civil service*, including that of the democratic republic in particular, shows itself likewise to be an organ of capitalist rule : the corruption of public servants and the brotherhood of government and capital.

4. Indispensable for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is the *revolutionary seizure* of state power by the proletariat. Only when the construction of the communist society is completed does the state wither away altogether.

5. The *dictatorship of the proletariat* is the state of the proletariat, organized as the ruling class therein, with the object of carrying socialization through.

6. The bourgeois, parasitical and oppressive state machine cannot be taken over and carried further by the victorious proletariat. On the contrary, the bureaucratic-military state machine must be smashed.[374]

Gandhi while asserting that the state is the embodiment of violence in a concentrated and organized form would not, however, agree with a Marxist that this violence is in its essence violence of class domination.

Secondly, the Gandhian programme is not 'the revolutionary seizure of power', which Marxism holds to be the *sine qua non* for the higher phase of socialism, the historic stage of the withering away of the state—but 'generation of power' from below.*

Gandhi would never approve of the centralization of state power even as a temporary expedient or as a transitional phase like the dictatorship of the proletariat.

Thirdly, the difference lies in the method. It is generally supposed that Gandhism and Marxism, while sharing the common ideal, depart from each other on the question of means. It has

* "A non-violent revolution is not a programme of 'seizure of power'. It is a programme of transformation of relationships ending in a peaceful transfer of power."—Gandhi in *Harijan*, 17.2.46, p. 14.

been the especial accusation against Marxism that it advocates the so-called Jesuitical maxim : End justifies means, and as such it places its reliance on violence as an instrument of capture of power. Gandhi himself while appreciating the ethical ideal of Communism was opposed to Marxism on this ground, apart of course from that of the basic philosophical belief. We submit, however, that this is not a correct reading of Marxism. Marxism is not 'Machiavellism'. Dialectical materialism does not know dualism between means and end. Marxists evaluate means not by absolute standard but by *consequences*. A means can be justified only by its end. But the end in its turn needs to be justified. From the Marxist point of view, which expresses the historical interests of the proletariat, the end is justified if it leads to increasing the power of men over nature and to the abolition of power of man over man. Marxism recognizes the dialectical inseparability of means and ends.* This interrelation of means and ends in no way implies that any end justifies *any* means. It implies rather that means and ends are so inextricably connected that the question cannot be answered by any simple 'yes' or 'no'. The means to social progress must be adapted to their end and be harmonious with it. According to the Marxian doctrine, the means by which the moral goal of socialism can be achieved in an immoral world are determined not only by the nature of socialism as the end but also by the nature of capitalist state power, the degree of democratic development, the relative strength of the opposing forces, specific situations, and so on. Marxism does not *advocate* violence for its own sake** (its condemnation of individual terrorist method is too

* cf. In his play, *Franz von Sickingen*, Ferdinand Lasalle put the following words into the mouth of one of the heroes :

"...Show not the *goal*
But show also the *path*. So closely interwoven
Are path and goal that each with other
Ever changes, and other *paths* forthwith
Another *goal* set up."

—Cited in Trotsky Dewey Novack, *Their Morals and Ours*, Merit Publishers, New York, 1966, p. 42.

** "...opposition to all violence is our ultimate ideal—it is a hellishly hard task."—Lenin to Gorky, cited in René Fülöp-Miller, *Lenin and Gandhi*, Tr. : F. S. Flint and D. F. Tait, G. P. Putnam's Sons, London & New York, 1927, p. xiii.

well known) ; violence is thrust upon the oppressed by the ruling class, and the majority of the population as a measure of self-defence and of vindicating the ethical ideal of non-exploitation represented by Communism takes resort to *just* and *necessary* violence.* The extent of violence which must be employed is a matter that depends on the intensity of the resistance which is countenanced. Gandhi, on the other hand, quite like any other ethical idealist, would urge upon us that we must confine ourselves to *means that are in themselves* good. Violence is all evil and therefore to be eschewed, Gandhi held. A Marxist may allege that Gandhi in his eagerness to stick to the moral failed to draw a distinction between what is *evil* and what is morally *wrong*. The difference between Marxism and Gandhism, therefore, is fundamental.[375]

Fourthly, according to the Marxian theory of the state, it is only in the Communist society, where there would be no classes (i.e. where there would be no difference between the members of society in respect of their relationship to the social means of production), that the state as such ceases of itself : the government of persons is replaced by the administration of things and the direction of the process of production. The state is not abolished, it withers away. But during the transitional period of the dictatorship of the proletariat a series of restriction on the freedom of the oppressors, the exploiters and the capitalists are imposed *simultaneously* with an immense expansion of democracy, which *for the first*

* In the long run the great social movements involving the actions of masses of people, such as the Cromwellian and French Revolutions, the Russian Revolution of 1917, or the Asian-African-Latin Amrican anti-imperialist struggles of the present day, can be judged only in the way Mark Twain judged the French Revolution when he wrote : "There were two 'Reigns of Terror,' if we would but remember it and consider it ; the one wrought murder in hot passion, the other in heartless cold blood ; the one lasted mere months, the other had lasted a thousand years ; the one inflicted death upon ten thousand persons, the other upon a hundred millions; but our shudders are all for the 'horrors' of the minor Terror, the momentary Terror, so to speak. ...A city cemetry could contain the coffins filled by that brief Terror which we all have been taught to shiver at and mourn over ; but all France could hardly contain the coffins filled by that older and real Terror—that unspeakably bitter and awful Terror which none of us has been taught to see in its vastness or pity it deserves." (*A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court*)

time becomes democracy for the poor, democracy for the people. Democracy for the vast majority of the people, and suppression by force, i.e., exclusion from democracy, of the exploiters and oppressors of the people—this is the change that democracy undergoes during the transition from capitalism to Communism. Gandhi, on the other hand, would not approve of forcible suppression of adversaries under any circumstances. He would stand for conversion of the adversary through non-violent non-co-operation. There is never the need for the satyāgrahī, according to Gandhi, to wait till all opposition has been liquidated.* Voluntary associations of the people would spring up in the present, and not in some distant future, which would regulate as far as possible the economic and political life of the community. The constructive programme of Gandhi, it may be noted here, not only accompanies and follows non-violent direct action to eliminate state authority, but it precedes that as well. Gandhi described this process as 'one of automatic adjustment'. In other words, the chief difference between the Marxian theory of the state and Gandhi's ideal of state lies in the fact that in the latter the process of the elimination of state authority is supposed to begin from the immediate present, while 'withering away of the state' presupposes 'expropriation of the expropriators' and the dictatorship of the proletariat.[376]

Was Gandhi a philosophical anarchist ? Gandhi's reference to 'enlightened anarchy' as the ultimate ideal and his definition of *Rāma Rāj* as the 'sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority', and other similar statements expressing abhorrence of the state as an institution, have lent the impression that he was a philosophical anarchist. Dr. Gopinath Dhawan and a host of scholars[377] subscribe to this view. To quote Dr. Dhawan : "To Gandhiji the end is 'the greatest

* "I will not wait till I have converted the whole society to my view but will straightway make a beginning with myself." *Harijan*, 31.3.46, pp. 63-4 : 'Gandhiji's Communism' by Pyarelal.

Dr. Mahadeva Prasad comments : "...like orthodox Marxists, Gandhi does not dream of *withering* away of the State but in *scattering* away of it." —*Social Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vishwavidalaya Prakashan, Gorakhpur, 1958, p. 237.

good of all.' He is a philosophical anarchist because he believes that this end can be realized only in the classless Stateless democracy of autonomous village communities based on non-violence instead of coercion, on service instead of exploitation, on renunciation instead of acquisitivenss and on the largest measure of local and individual initiative instead of centralization. ...Gandhiji, ...ideally speaking, repudiates the State as such..."[378] Gandhi has often been described as a religious anarchist or a pacifist anarchist like Tolstoy.[379]

Dr. Benoy Sarkar observed that Gandhi was "an almost literal paraphraser of Tolstoy as regards denunciation of the state and advocacy of non-violence. Stripped of all metaphysics, his non-co-operation=away from the state=anarchism (cf. BAKUNIN, KROPOTKIN, TOLSTOY) one remembers likewise the anti-statal Spencerian indifferentism of TAGORE'S *Swadeshi Samaj*."[380]

The opinion that Gandhi was a philosophical anarchist has not been shared by all. P. Spratt while recognizing the influence of Tolstoy on Gandhi refuses to call Gandhi an anarchist.[381]

Dr. Biman Bihari Mazumdar observes: "Mahatma Gandhi condemned the existing social and political order as unjust and he opposed the centralising policy of the state but he never advocated the destruction of the state itself. He may be more aptly described as an upholder of co-operative socialism but unlike the Guild Socialists, Syndicalists and Industrial Unionists, he laid all the emphasis on handicrafts and cottage industries."[382]

Dr. Power comments: "...unlike Tolstoy, Gandhi did not endorse a stateless society for the temporal world. To do so would have precluded him from struggling for national India's own sovereignty...His approach to the ethical nature of the state agrees with Max Weber's view, that the state is a technical tool rather than something of intrinsic worth."[383]

Haridas T. Muzumdar says: "Inspite of his proclaimed belief in the least government as being the best, Gandhi had nothing in common with anarchism."[384]

Dr. Bondurant, in her masterly study, observes that the Gandhian approach points the way towards reconciling political organization with the ideals of anarchism. She criticizes Dhawan's standpoint in not recognizing the relative unimportance of end-structure in the Gandhian approach to the state, and again when Prof. Dhawan suggests that Gandhi's democracy would be '...based on non-violence instead of coercion...'. For in the Gandhian ideal, she argues, an element of coercion is, in fact, retained. Another point of her criticism relates to Dhawan's description of the non-violent state as the second best society, a middle way. Bondurant holds that it would be inaccurate to suppose that Gandhi thought of retaining the state as some intermediate step in a determined progress towards anarchical society, in the manner of Marxist thought. Carrying the argument further, she comments that politics *based on* satyāgraha does *not* carry with it elements of *hiṃsā*, but of *ahiṃsā*. It still remains politics and may involve a government, a state structure. Gandhi held essential ideals in common with anarchists, but he was willing, as they are not, to accept a degree of state organization and control. Gandhi, according to Bondurant, could not accept the overall philosophical anarchist position. Another important point that she mentions is: Anarchists, like other political theorists, have rarely sought a positive *technique* whereby a system could be realized.[385]

Now to come to the conclusion. We have argued earlier that there were two Gandhis—the idealist philosopher and the realist politician—who, paradoxically enough, represented a singularly unified character. Dr. Atindranath Bose correctly noted that Gandhi's "methodology had a pragmatic and an idealist aspect while his philosophy was purely idealistic."[386] That explains why Gandhi went far ahead of his time and reality. He dreamt of an enlightened anarchy and led the movement for the establishment of a free democratic state. The contradiction between the abstract and the concrete, the ideal and the real, we repeat, can only be appreciated if we take note of the gap between the role that history assigned to

Gandhi* and his subjective yearning for perfection. His astute sense of realism impelled him to fight for the creation of a sovereign national state, which he knew would be far from perfect. Gandhi, unlike some Anarchists, did not contemplate dispensing with the machinery of the state so long as it was a necessity. His concession in favour of state ownership of heavy industries —though his own preference was for the control or ownership of the means of production to lie with smaller, decentralized, more or less autonomous units—brought him close to the socialist programme. Here his position is distinctly different from that of the anarchists who are out to 'abolish' the state. Secondly, while the anarchists are apolitical or even anti-political,[387] Gandhi was intensely political. As a politician he knew that politics refers to the disposition of power. And so he moved for a shift of power from the hands of foreign imperialists to a democratic national state. Here a point is to be restated. As the champion of the disinherited he would certainly like to see the interests of the toiling people to get the priority in such a state. Prof. Nirmal Kumar Bose succintly sums up the position when he says : "...Gandhi's conception of the State is neither completly like that of the Anarchists nor of the Communists. It approaches the former with regard to its aim of political and economic decentralization, and that of the latter in that the interest of the toiling millions will have a dictatorial position within the State."[388]

One notices that Gandhi did not ignore the demand or underrate the value of the immediate and temporary for the sake of the ultimate. It was somewhat unique on his part to reconcile the apparent contradiction ; in his corporate activity he laid stress on the immediate—one step was enough for him —only to draw further sustenance for attaining to the ideal he cherished. Gandhi, in a rather exalted philosophical mood, could well share Shelley's anarchist vision* of man in a world

* "...the task put before him [Gandhi] by history is circumscribed..." —J. B. Kripalani, *Gandhian Thought*, Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, New Delhi, Orient Longmans Ltd., Bombay Calcutta etc., 1961, p. 56.

which still lies outside history and outside time, but the realist in him would wake up again to come to grips with the realities with a grim determination to reshape this time-bound world. The distinctive merit of Gandhi lies in the fact that he could dream as well as act.

* The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself ; just, gentle, wise :
—*Promethus Unbound*, Act III, ll. 193-7.